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Palestinian Affairs

Officials Preview Compromise Proposal on Talks

JN0804064993 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 8-9 Apr 93 pp 1, 5

[By JORDAN TIMES staff reporter Maryam M. Shahin]

[Text] Amman—A compromise formula aimed at breaking the impasse over Arab participation in the ninth round of the Arab-Israeli peace talks is currently going through its final stages of approval and is likely to be struck this week, Palestinian officials said Wednesday.

The formula, which is based on simultaneous declarations of commitment by Palestinian, Israeli and American officials is expected to be announced shortly before the Arab-Israeli peace talks are scheduled to resume April 20, enabling all parties to attend.

It entails a written Israeli commitment to 1) end the policy of expelling Palestinians from their homeland, 2) significantly improve treatment of Palestinians in the occupied territories, and 3) adhere to the terms of reference and base the negotiations on U.N. resolutions 242 and 338.

The Israeli declaration will be handed to American officials before Palestinians head for a final Arab coordination meeting of the foreign ministers and peace negotiators April 16, a Palestinian official said.

Along with the Israeli statement Palestinians will simultaneously announce that they are returning to both the bilateral and multilateral talks, said the official, Mr. Salih Ra'fat, who is a member of the Palestine Central Council (PCC).

The American part will comprise a declaration or a statement in which the U.S. administration is expected to 1) outline its own commitment and role in the peace process, 2) say its policy is to strengthen the implementation of resolutions 242 and 338 in the peace process, and 3) make further commitments to the six-point plan outlined during U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's visit to the region.

The statements, if made, will be in sharp contrast to public statements made thus far by both American and Israeli officials, who have vowed not to make any "concessions" vis-a-vis the peace process prior to a Palestinian "yes" regarding their participation in round nine.

While public statements made by Palestinian officials have indicated that Israeli and American "assurances of commitments" were in the making, they were not seen as a sufficient "enticement" allowing for a Palestinian return to the talks. Mr. Ra'fat, and other PLO officials confirmed that "progress has been made and chances of success are seen as possible."

Members of the Palestinian delegation which visited Washington last month insisted that "no progress" had been made and all American and Israeli promises were "vague and insufficient." Mr. Ra'fat, who is the spokesman for the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine ('Abd-Rabbuh wing), told the JORDAN TIMES that there was hope for a resumption of the talks by April 20.

Not all details have been agreed upon by the three parties concerned with the declaration. The Palestinians and the Israelis still have to agree on the wording of the Israeli statement, one Palestinian official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, told the JORDAN TIMES.

If the Israelis fail to make this "written" commitment, the April 16 talks in Damascus are expected to come up with a negative verdict on the issue of Arab participation, said the PLO soruce.

"The Arab position will be united," Mr. Ra'fat said, confirming predictions made by other Arab negotiators and participants at the last Damascus meeting of foreign ministers and peace negotiators.

Knowing that the Arabs will either all go or not go at all has given strength to the negotiating position of what Palestinians call the "weakest of all parties namely the Palestinians."

"The Americans have become aware that this is not just an issue of 'convincing the Palestinians to go'," said Palestinian negotiator Ghassan al-Khatib on his way back from Washington and Tunis to the occupied territories. "The Americans realise that there is a genuine chance that if nothing changes before April 20 there will be an Arab suspension of the peace talks," Mr. al-Khatib said.

This awareness, argues Mr. Ra'fat, makes the chances of an Israeli agreement to a commitment on some major issues all the more likely.

Senior U.S. State Department officials have said Israel would unveil a package of gestures and actions in the occupied territories as soon as the Palestinians say "yes" to returning to the talks. "Verbal promises have proved fruitless in the past and we no longer trust them," said Mr. al-Khatib.

Mr. al-Khatib stressed that the Palestinians wanted "written commitments."

According to Mr. Ra'fat, an American declaration, which would be made simultaneous to that of the Israelis and Palestinians, would go "one step further than the Israeli declaration."

"The Americans will clearly say that they are committed to following up the terms of reference and mention certain points in particular, mainly Jerusalem," added the PLO source who preferred anonymity.

Palestinian negotiators have said that they want Israeli commitments not to use expulsions as a policy towards

Palestinians, guarantees on the issue of human rights and an agreement to use U.N. resolutions 242 and 338 as the main terms of reference.

"We got nowhere with the Israelis in the last 15 months and it's about time that they commit themselves to the points of reference as outlined in the invitations to the Madrid talks," Mr. al-Khatib said. The issue of Jerusalem, an issue that the Israelis have categorically refused to discuss, "is included in the terms of reference. The terms of reference actually say that Jerusalem is negotiable," Mr. al-Khatib pointed out.

Talks in Washington next week by Arab delegations from Jordan Syria and Lebanon are expected to strengthen the impression of a "united Arab stand" on the issue of returning to the peace talks.

The Palestinian expellee issue worked together with a variety of points concerning individual and joint Arab interests swayed the mood at the Damascus meeting last week and allowed for the joint position, say Palestinians who attended the meeting.

An accelerated phased return of the expellees in South Lebanon is expected to follow the agreement to return to the peace talks by the Palestinians.

An Arab foreign ministers conference scheduled to take place in Cairo April 18 is also expected to confirm that the Arab countries will go back to the multilateral talks or will suspend participation for yet another round.

"All depends on the willingness of Israel to agree to let us be equal partners in these talks," Mr. Ra'fat said.

Mubarak's 10-Point Plan on Peace Talks Reported

TA0704143693 Jerusalem AL-MANAR in Arabic 5 Apr 93 pp 1, 11

[Text] Before departing for Washington to meet U.S. President Bill Clinton, Egyptian President Husni Mubarak met with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad and Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat and discussed with them the issue of negotiations and the peace process, the obstacles to this process, and the presumed U.S. role in it.

President Mubarak arrived in Washington speaking in the name of the Arab negotiating parties and carrying a plan with several points to be presented to the U.S. President. The implementation of this plan by the parties concerned would provide another chance for all the parties participating in the ninth round of negotiations, expected to be held in Washington on 20 April.

This plan was proposed by president 'Arafat, who discussed its clauses with the Egyptian leadership. The plan was drafted meticulously and after careful study. All the prevailing conditions, including those in the Israeli arena, as well as the success achieved by Faysal al-Husayni, head of the Palestinian negotiating team, during his visit to Washington were taken into consideration during the drafting of the plan. Mubarak and 'Arafat discussed the results of this visit in Cairo.

The clauses of the plan carried by the Egyptian president to Washington are:

1. The U.S. Administration should affirm its practical and serious participation in the negotiations.

2. The United States should promise to resume the dialogue with the PLO before the beginning of the 10th round.

3. All the deportees in Marj al-Zuhur must be returned before next autumn.

4. Israel should release a group of detainees, including those with long-term prison sentences.

5. Some of the deportees who have been deported since 1967 must be repatriated.

6. An Israeli-Palestinian statement will be issued during the ninth round, calling for an end to violence.

7. Two East Jerusalem residents will participate in the ninth round, or at the minimum in the 10th round.

8. The negotiating representation should be upgraded and Washington must promise to force Israel to agree on the participation of Palestinian officials in the negotiating rounds.

9. Practical steps on the road to peace must be realized in the ninth round.

10. An Israeli commitment must be made to stop the deportation policy.

This is the plan carried by the Egyptian president to the U.S. president following a Palestinian-Egyptian formulation in Cairo. In the wake of U.S. agreement on this plan as something minimal, the Palestinian leadership will issue a statement affirming its agreement to attend the upcoming round of negotiations at its fixed date. It has been learned that the Palestinian leadership has asked Cairo and the other Arab capitals, if possible, to postpone the ninth round for one week.

At any rate, Palestinian sources have stressed that the Palestinian side is interested in the talks so participation in the upcoming round is completely justified.

Delegate Urges Resumption of Peace Negotiations

TA0704145293 Jerusalem AL-FAJR in English 5 Apr 93 p 16

[Interview with Sari Nusaybah, member of the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks, by Khalid Abu-'Akir; place and date not given]

[Text] Q: The escalation in killings of Israelis led the authorities to impose a siege on the occupied territories. What do you think about this escalation?

A: Primarily, I imagine that it is the result of the increasing frustration felt by Palestinians in the occupied territories with the peace process. It is also perhaps an expression of the feelings of anger following the expulsion order. It might also be a reflection, in some instances, of the hopes of those within the Palestinian community who are opposed to the peace process, to try and undermine it.

I believe that this wave of violence cannot be understood as an expression of only a single cause, but it is the result of a collection of causes.

Q: At the moment, does it seem that the majority of Palestinians have lost faith in the peace process and think there should be a total reevaluation of that process?

A: It is unfortunate if the Palestinians have lost interest in this process, because this process is in their interest. While it is not incorrect to go on evaluating continuously the world's position vis-a-vis the peace process and vis-a-vis everything else, nonetheless, it is clear to me that this peace process is evolving, and it carries within it the seeds of a possible solution that will benefit the Palestinians.

In my opinion, the Palestinians should give the peace process the chance it deserves. They should pursue it, and they should see what they can get out of it. They should not lose patience or lose their interest so quickly.

Q: After the expulsion, the Palestinians boycotted the peace process. Recently there was talk about a return to the peace talks if certain conditions are fulfilled. Will the Palestinians participate or not?

A: As far as the next round of talks is concerned, in my opinion it is unquestionable that as far as the interest of the Palestinians is concerned, it is necessary for the Palestinians to continue with the talks.

I also understand that there is a negative public mood within the Palestinian community with regard to the talks, as well as with regard to the measures taken by Israel. If Israel, from its side, is genuinely interested in the process, I believe that Israel should then take some measures which will change the public mood so that when the Palestinians attend the next round of talks, the community will express support for them.

On the other hand, Israel should take measures to prove to the Palestinian community that it is serious about having entered a process that will change life in the occupied territories.

I believe that Israel is capable of adopting various measures. I don't only refer to the question of expulsions; I'm also referring to other measures that, for example, relate to prisoners. The 17th of April is the day we commemorate Prisoners' Day. In this context, Israel can take a lot of measures which will indicate to the Palestinians that it is genuine on its part, both with regard to prisoners who under 16 years of age which Israel can release and in regard to prisoners who have spent over 20 years in jail.

I believe measures that Israel can take in this regard—and it can take these measures on its own initiative, not as conditions, but as a show of goodwill on its part—I think it will help to change the climate, and it will help to give the Palestinian negotiating team more credibility.

Boycott Not 'Withdrawal' From Peace Process

PM0704155693 London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic 7 Apr 93 p5

[Fathi al-Barqawi report: "Zakariya al-Agha: Our Boycott of the Ninth Round Does Not Mean We Are Withdrawing From the Peace Process"]

[Excerpts] Tunis—Zakariya al-Agha, member of the Palestinian delegation to the bilateral peace negotiations with Israel, has stated that unless the Palestinians are convinced that their participation in the ninth round of negotiations, due to be held in Washington on 20 April, will produce something positive in the interest of the Palestinian people, the delegation will not respond to the invitation and may seek a postponement until a later date, even if other Arab parties go to the negotiations.

Al-Agha, who took part in the Palestinian leadership's meeting in Tunis, said that, in his view, the Palestinian position will remain firm in refusing to participate unless significant developments occur to confirm that tangible results can be expected from participation in the negotiations.

In an exclusive statement to AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI before he left Tunis for the Gaza Strip, al-Agha said that refusal to participate in the ninth round does not mean withdrawal from the peace process but would rather be a move to draw the attention of the United States and Russia, the cosponsors, and Israel to the fact that the Palestinians agreed to participate in the negotiations not for the sake of negotiation but to fulfill some of the Palestinian people's aspirations. [passage omitted]

The member of the Palestinian negotiating delegation said that the U.S. proposals made so far cannot be considered convincing. He added that there has been no significant change in the U.S. and Israeli positions, noting that what U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher offered the Palestinian delegation which he recently met with in Washington, including Faysal al-Husayni and Hanan 'Ashrawi, was nothing more than signals or hints without any specific or tangible promises that would justify a change in the declared Palestinian position.

He added: "It can be clearly said that there is no clear offer by the United States as sponsor of the negotiations or as a mediator. The hints made by U.S. State Department officials were to the effect that the issues to be raised during the bilateral negotiations, such as the

principle of deportation, the terms of reference, and other matters, would be discussed seriously." [passage omitted]

On the possibility of a change in the U.S. position after Egyptian President Husni Mubarak's meeting with U.S. President Bill Clinton, al-Agha said that the PLO had no desire to sever direct and indirect contacts with Washington, because they are important and vital in the current international circumstances, but since direct contacts have produced no decisive position, it is necessary to rely on what the mediators can do. [passage omitted]

Al-Agha said that the Palestinian position is strong but that it is exposed, in his view, to direct and indirect pressures by the United States, some Arab parties, and some friendly international parties. He stressed the need for steadfastness in the face of such pressures. He said in this connection that the European troika delegation which met with Palestinian officials in Amman and Jerusalem last week, conveyed a specific message from the Americans. He said that the delegation "was simply a messenger," but he stressed that the Palestinian position was clear and based on the fact that the Palestinians place no obstacles in the way of the peace process and resumption of the negotiations and that Israel should remove the existing obstacles. The Palestinians also called for a clear European stance but the Europeans still seem unable to play an effective part and are still following the United States.

Q: Many members of the Palestinian delegation put a condition on the team's participation in the coming round of talks. At first the condition was "the return of all the expellees," and now it is "finding a solution for the expellee problem." Can we label this as a retreat in the Palestinian position?

A: I'm not sure that I'm equipped to analyze the various declarations of the various delegation members, and they should perhaps answer for themselves.

In my opinion, I believe that the issue of the expulsion of 400- odd people is not anywhere as important, for example, as spilling human blood. When I personally weigh the killing of a child in the Gaza Strip and the expulsion of 400 people for two years, I give far more weight to the child that was killed.

If I were to put any conditions, I don't see why I shouldn't put conditions regarding killings while I put conditions regarding expulsions for two years. Why shouldn't I then put conditions regarding expellees who have been expelled since the beginning of the Intifadah (while I put) conditions on the people who were expelled recently? Or why shouldn't I put conditions on the people who were expelled for life while I put conditions for the people in Lebanon?

What I think is we should look at a collection of issues. We should not give more weight or more importance to some of those issues unless indeed they deserve to be given more weight. Secondly, we should distinguish between the main aim of the Palestinians, which is to get rid of the occupation, and on the other hand, the measures that the occupation authorities take against us.

We should not be negotiating to make life under occupation better. We should be more interested in negotiating to get rid of the occupation that gives rise to those measures against us in the first place.

Q: Are you saying that returning to the talks is a priority in order to discuss all these matters with the Israeli side?

A: I speak for myself. I believe that the Palestinians should attend the next round of talks because the main issue that should concern us is a process which will lead to an end to the occupation. At the same time, we should not lose sight of that target.

If Israel takes measures against us, we should try to do everything in our power to make Israel reject all those measures, but at the same time, we must not be made to deviate from the original aim, which is to put an end to the occupation.

As far as I know, the peace process at the moment is the only option we have to change our status from what it has been for the last 27 years. We should not lose sight of this.

I wish to add that every day that we lose is a day that is counted against us, because every day Israel is building more facts on the ground that are detrimental to our interest.

'Ashrawi: U.S. Bias Toward Israel Affects Talks

TA0704132493 Jerusalem AL-FAJR in Arabic 5 Apr 93 pp 1, 11

[By Rashid Hilal]

[Excerpt] Ramallah—QUDS PRESS—U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's recent statements have caused great dismay in Palestinian circles, which considered those statements to be "bias that does not serve the peace process" in the region. Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi, spokesman of the Palestinian delegation to the Middle East peace talks, said that "the credibility of the United States and its relations with the Arab world are adversely affected whenever it adopts positions that are more biased toward Israel." In a statement to QUDS PRESS, 'Ashrawi added: If the United States wishes to play the role of sponsor to the peace process and enjoy credibility not only in the peace process but also in its relationship with the region's countries, a more neutral and less biased stance toward Israel is required. [passage omitted]

Hamas Official on Contacts, PLO Alternative

TA0704164293 Jerusalem AL-MANAR in Arabic 5 Apr 93 p 3

[Interview with Muhammad Nazzal, Hamas—Islamic Resistance Movement—representative in Jordan, by Fawzi al-Bandari, in Amman; date not given]

[Text] [Al-Bandari] Your contacts with Western diplomats in Amman have generated numerous interpretations. Can you clarify those contacts?

[Nazzal] Which interpretations do you mean?

[Al-Bandari] Some are interpreting your contacts as practical substitution for the PLO.

[Nazzal] All the interpretations that you heard or read about are not objective, because as far as the Westerners in general, and the Americans in particular, are concerned, I think that Hamas is a rejected alternative for two reasons:

First, according to the Western concept, Hamas is a "fundamentalist" movement.

Second, Hamas opposes a political settlement and constitutes a great danger to its perpetuity.

Consequently, Hamas cannot be dealt with as an alternative to the PLO, which in its identity is the opposite of Hamas. The PLO is secular and advocates a political settlement, in which it is participating by force. The PLO is also the party that is ready to make the most concessions.

[Al-Bandari] Another interpretation says that those contacts are an attempt by the U.S. Administration to contain Hamas and moderate your positions on the deportees and a political settlement.

[Nazzal] The intentions and objectives of others do not interest us. When Hamas conducted its dialogues with U.S. and Western diplomats, it sought to acquaint them with its political positions directly and without intermediaries. What you said about the intent to contain Hamas and moderate its positions cannot be realized in one or two meetings but requires continuous, intensive meetings.

[Al-Bandari] Let us go back to the issue of contacts with Westerners. Can you explain the nature of those contacts and what went on in them?

[Nazzal] Some meetings were held with the political adviser at the U.S. Embassy in Amman. The first one was held in December and the second in January. The third meeting was slated for February, but it floundered because we insisted that the meeting be held only with the U.S. ambassador. Other meetings were held in February with the British, Italian, and German ambassadors. Those meetings were initiated by Hamas to clarify its positions on the U.S.-Israeli deal.

[Al-Bandari] The British ambassador has said that no one convinced the other. Can this remark be considered as a summation of your meetings with him and the other ambassadors?

[Nazzal] We are not supposed to convince others or be convinced in one or two meetings. Our meetings were not contacts of protocol but dialogues aimed at explaining our views and the issues that I mentioned earlier. I do not believe that the British ambassador's expression in describing what went on at the meeting was accurate. We agreed with him on the position rejecting the occupation and Israeli measures as well as on the need to implement Security Council Resolution 799 relating to the immediate repatriation of the deportees. As for a political settlement, it was not expected that any side would convince the other of its position. What applies to the British ambassador also applies to the other ambassadors to differing degrees.

[Al-Bandari] Will the U.S. State Department's announcement on stopping contacts with Hamas affect the dialogues that you are conducting with Westerners in general?

[Nazzal] For our part, we will continue with our dialogues, because as far as we are concerned dialogue constitutes an important groundwork for explaining our positions. As for the other parties, this depends on their own considerations.

[Al-Bandari] What caused the U.S. State Department to announce a halt to contacts with Hamas?

[Nazzal] This question should presumably be posed to the U.S. State Department, but our assessment is that the Zionist lobby in the United States as well as the Israeli Government exerted pressure on the U.S. Administration. This forced them to announce a halt to the contacts.

[Al-Bandari] How serious is the U.S. State Department in its intention to include Hamas in the annual list of terrorist organizations?

[Nazzal] There is no objective or logical justification to include Hamas in the list of terrorist organizations. Hamas is a national liberation movement, and in this it is in harmony even with the Geneva Convention. Moreover, Hamas has not carried out any operation according to the U.S. classification of terrorist organizations, which is based on attacking U.S. interests. Hamas has not attacked any U.S. interests, whether inside or outside the occupied territories.

Algeria

Two 'Terrorists' Reported Killed 5 Apr

LD0604222593 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 6 Apr 93

[Text] A statement by the national gendarmerie command, reported by APS, said that yesterday, Monday, two terrorists in a Renault 4 were killed in Baba Hassen in the province of Tipasa after refusing to stop at a checkpoint. An automatic weapon and cartridges were recovered. One of the terrorists had a trade union card in the name of Chaouaf Ali. This terrorist had killed a taxi driver in Blida in March, the statement added.

The two terrorists who were killed yesterday morning in Boudouaou in the province of Boumerdes were identified today. They were Rouan Kamal, a resident of Berrehloun, Boudouaou, and Larbi Abdallah, resident of Koursou.

The national gendarmerie authorities yesterday arrested 25 terrorists between Kasr El Boukhari and Bourouagia in the province of Medea.

Villas in Club des Pins Destroyed After Evacuation Decision

LD0604143993 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 6 Apr 93

[Excerpt] To know the truth about the destruction of government residences in Club des Pins [seaside housing complex west of Algiers with halls for international conferences and villas for regime officials] after a decision to evacuate them, the radio correspondent Lakhdar Darraji visited these houses this morning and sent the following report.

[Begin Darraji recording] An earthquake occurred in Club des Pins, or, to be more accurate, inside the villas, which were affected by the government decision to evacuate them. That is the least we can say in our field report this morning on some of these villas, which are in a shocking state. No human being can imagine that any official has ever lived in them at any time. The destruction affected 80 percent of these villas, according to the club's officials—from the front gate to the inner doors of the villas to the windows and even the furniture belonging to the establishment of Club des Pins.

The gardens of the villas did not escape from these acts of savage sabotage either. Small trees were chopped down and vegetables were ripped out when they had not yet yielded crops. Savage acts are what occurred in these villas. Bathrooms were smashed, others were ripped out, and the heating systems were destroyed. The inner walls of the villas were also completely destroyed. [passage omitted in which officials surveying the damage state that some of the villas were used to house animals and others were centers for the treatment of animals; walls were destroyed when the occupants removed their possessions from them; officials at the complex said justice will be brought to those who carried out the acts] [end recording]

Government Spokesman on March, Club des Pins

LD0804101193 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1946 GMT 7 Apr 93

[Video report by Mohamed Abbad, with recorded excerpts from news conference by Messaoud Ait Chaalal, government official spokesman; "today"; place not given; passages in slantlines French]

[Text] [Abbad] In front of a gathering of journalists, Mr. Messaoud Ait Chaalal touched on the intense activities of the government in the past few weeks and also talked about cooperation with the outside world and the march staged on 22 March [in Algiers against terrorism].

About the recent meeting held between the government and the General Union of Algerian Workers, the government's official spokesman said that it gave useful results, since it led to several decisions being made with regard to employment issues, and it helped draw up a timetable and agenda for the next meetings, which will gradually lead to the solution of the main problems of employment.

[Chaalal] We believe that this method we have agreed upon is very useful, and there is no doubt that in the next few days we will resume these negotiations and these talks in order to tackle, gradually, the main problems existing in the field of employment.

[Abbad] Mr. Messaoud Ait Chaalal also talked about the meeting between the prime minister and the governors held on 4 April. This meeting helped assess the general situation in the country after the march staged on 22 March, which is considered a popular uprising determining the country's future. The organizers of this march were expecting this march to be staged only in the major cities, but due to a large response from the people, it was staged in all the provinces of the country. Thus, the masses expressed their rejection and denunciation of terrorism and subversion.

The marches had a wide impact inside the country and abroad, and this means that they should continue in order to maintain the mobilization of public opinion. But how can this be achieved?

[Chaalal] You should know that the organizations that took this initiative are now examining the means and the method, /the methodology. They are examining ways and means to organize this movement and give it a permanent character reflecting the mobilization of the popular masses./ We consider that this objective to mobilize the popular masses on a permanent basis against terrorism and subversion reflects the new situation that we are feeling. In other words, this is an essential turning point with the past. Now, the people have themselves taken the initiative and the resolute

decision to intervene directly in the fight against terrorism and subversion. Therefore, the prime minister gave instructions to the governors to support and help these mass organizations that took the initiative in their current efforts to organize, in the next few days, these popular forces and enable them to continue their action and the stands they adopted on 22 March.

[Abbad] Mr. Messaoud Ait Chaalal then talked about the main points discussed by the Council of Government at its latest meeting, and these include draft bills to bolster the efficiency of the special courts charged with combatting terrorism and subversion in order to fill the gaps existing in this field. Such gaps include the issue concerning the financing of terrorism, which is considered an effective contribution in this subversive operation.

[Chaalal] There are people who are financing [terrorism], and we know that many of them use this method in order, as they say in French /to launder their money./

We also know that there is a /link/ between /the big trabendo [black market and illicit trading]/ and terrorism. This is well- known. Now, in view of the clarifications we added to the law of the councils, the law against terrorism and subversion, everyone will have to assume their responsibility, and they should know that the government is determined and firmly resolved to eradicate these methods used either directly or indirectly to reinforce and strengthen terrorism and subversion.

[Abbad] Regarding the structure and ways to facilitate this task, the draft bill suggests enabling the special courts to operate like trial courts [Ghuraf al-Muhakamah] in order to speed up their work. The bill also suggests increasing the authority of the president of the court, who would then be entitled to have some lawyers who obstruct or disturb court proceedings evicted or arrested temporarily or permanently [as heard]. The temporary arrest ranges from 3 months to one year. Lawyers would also be required to apply in advance for an authorization from the special court, which would allow them to defend their clients.

The draft bill also includes extending the powers of the public prosecutor.

[Chaalal] The public prosecutor would have large powers, which would allow him to take on or drop any problem and any case that is related to terrorism. /In other words, it is the public prosecutor of a special court who decides to take on or drop any case linked in any way with subversion and terrorism. It is for him to decide. If he thinks that a case being examined by a common law court is a case related to terrorism, he will say: It is for me to deal with this problem, and then the case is immediately referred to a special court. Conversely, for the sake of facilitating matters, if he thinks that some cases are minor and if he wants, because of timeliness, to drop a case that is not serious, he has the power to drop it and refer it to the relevant court. He is the only one who has the power to decide./

[Abbad] The recent cabinet meeting also examined the issue of the private sector, which it regards as an important factor in the country's development, with no distinction between it and the public sector.

[Chaalal] /It is a sector that must be treated with no discrimination whatsoever. It is a sector which will play, which plays, and which will have to play an even bigger role in the future./

[Abbad] The cabinet adopted a number of recommendations aimed at supporting this sector. These recommendations concern the problems related to rising investment costs following a devaluation of the dinar, which should be accompanied by a cut in interest rates. The new measures guarantee the presence of the private sector in the special commission in charge of examining the outstanding problems as soon as possible. Thus, the private sector will be a permanent member of the special commission set up by the minister delegate to small and medium-sized industries.

Representatives of employers' organizations will also be present in this commission, whose task is to quickly draw up the final statutes of the Chamber of Commerce, which has gone through and is still going through difficult times. The cabinet also stressed its determination to continue to protect national production.

[Chaalal] We believe that at the present time and in the difficult circumstances that we are going through, /it is absolutely normal that we protect our national production./ Therefore, we will be taking new measures to protect national production. However, we must also be aware of the fact that this will not last. We must realize that if we enter a market economy, we must accept /competition./

At the moment, we are taking some crucial measures to defend national production, but the producers must realize that this will not last and that they must enter international competition like everybody else. / otherwise, it will not be possible./ We cannot /have our cake and eat it too. We can do it on a temporary basis, even if it does not correspond to some political directions which are recommended to us from outside. However, our operators must also enter competition in a good and effective manner./

[Abbad] The government's official spokesman talked about the flurry of activity accompanying the foreign delegations that recently visited our country, and he regarded this as a proof that Algeria still retains its international status and credibility, particularly after the march of 22 March.

Mr. Messaoud Ait Chaalal replied to numerous questions put to him by journalists. One of these questions concerned the issue of the Club des Pins villas, and he said that the recovery of these residences by the state was aimed at protecting the policemen who are under threat, because they are, he added, committed to the protection

of these residences and are thus exposed to great danger. The operation, he added, was not an arbitrary or retaliatory measure.

[Chaalal] The Club des Pins has become a state residence; /in other words, by its very nature it is absolutely inalienable,/ it cannot be sold; it cannot be bought; and it remains the property of the state whatever happens. You must realize that, and this must be said, because many are saying: yes, they are doing this to give the villas to their friends. /This is state property; by definition it becomes inalienable national property. It is an inalienable property that belongs to the state and that will remain state property. When the government decided to recover these villas, instructions were given by the prime minister himself to the minister of tourism and to the management of Club des Pins to find alternative accommodation for every tenant of the Club des Pins who left his villa and who has nowhere else to go. This is a general directive applicable to all the tenants who were asked to vacate their villas. This is an extremely important thing that has not been said enough times./ Many people say that we have evicted people and thrown them out of their villas and left them in the street. /This is not true./

There were clear propositions. /Tangible propositions were made to all the tenants, at least on a temporary basis until final solutions are found./ [Abbad] Mr. Messaoud Ait Chaalal also replied to a question on the rumors and attacks against the government and said in this respect:

[Chaalal] /You have seen very recently that the policy of the government was expressed very strongly as regards the problem of grabbing state property. We cannot resolve such problems with a magic wand./ The people really feel that some things have started moving in this country. I will tell you something, you want to see the evidence? I say the evidence lies in all these attacks. /We only see the tip of the iceberg and certain things, but in fact, and I am going to be very frank with you,/ these attacks and this uproar against the government are based on this, because many people, and some /interested parties feel targeted and feel really threatened. This is what explains these very violent reactions from certain quarters./ We feel reassured because we know where we are headed. /We know full well where we are going. Since our program is clear,/ the program is clear, and the objectives /are clearly defined, we are in a position to continue in our road with the greatest firmness and without any misgivings./

If anyone wants to criticize us, let them. What we say is that we know where we are headed and our policy is clear and therefore /nothing will divert us from the goal we have set ourselves./

Financial Agreements Signed With Portugal

LD0604222193 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 6 Apr 93

[Text] Algerian-Portuguese cooperation was expressed in the signing of two financial agreements this evening. The first agreement is worth $150 million and the second $100 million.

The first agreement will ensure the export of Portuguese goods to Algeria. It was signed on the Algerian side by Ahmed Benbitour, the minister delegate at the treasury, and on the Portuguese side by Antonio de Sousa, secretary of state for foreign trade.

The second agreement is for financing economic cooperation between Algerian and Portuguese organizations.

By way of its economic dealers, Portugal wants to invest in Algeria. Algeria and Portugal have laid down necessary and reasonable terms to encourage cooperation and develop the economy of the two countries.

Egypt

U.S. Visit To Foster 'Important Achievement' for Peace

NC0704153193 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1240 GMT 7 Apr 93

[Commentary by 'Atif 'Umar: "The Facts of the American- Egyptian Summit in Washington"]

[Text] In light of President Husni Mubarak's important talks with U.S. President Bill Clinton in the White House, his talks with Secretary of State Warren Christopher, and his talks with a number of American officials in the fields of economics, agriculture, trade, and energy, we can say that the results of Mubarak's visit were important and positive. The visit can promote joint American- Egyptian action at many levels, and its impact, especially on the Middle East peace process and the resumption of the peace negotiations in 20 April, will soon become clear.

In light of the statements of Mubarak and Clinton at the end of their talks in the White House yesterday, we can emphasize that there will be an important achievement in the next two weeks, especially on the collective Arab participation in the next round of peace negotiations.

President Mubarak managed to convey the entire Arab position regarding the peace process to the U.S. Administration. This was evident in the statements of the Egyptian and American leaders. The U.S. President stressed that the United States will participate in the peace process as a full partner. During President Mubarak's visit to the United States, intensive contacts were made through diplomatic channels between Washington and Tel Aviv to remove the causes that prevent the Palestinians from attending the ninth round of peace

talks, and to propose a number of solutions, notably to the Palestinian deportees crisis.

During his visit to the United States, President Mubarak was eager to highlight an important fact—specifically, the need for the Arabs to take advantage of the available opportunities to achieve a just, lasting, and comprehensive settlement of the Middle East crisis. The Palestinians have repeatedly stressed the need to postpone a decision on participation in Washington peace negotiations until after the Egyptian-American summit. They wanted to wait until President Mubarak explained to the American President all aspects of the Palestinian-Israeli crisis and its impact on their participation in the 20 April negotiations. President Mubarak was also to convey to the U.S. Administration comprehensive Arab views on two important points:

First, the possibility of the United States participating in the peace talks as a full partner, to prevent the Israelis from avoiding discussing the main issues that would remove tension and ease the Arab-Israeli conflict. This American participation would also ensure that Israel will not pursue policies that create confusion and skepticism and waste the current opportunity. Here, Israel should stop its violence against the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza, and commit itself to not using the deportation weapon again.

The second point is linked to serious work to establish peace in the next stage. There is no room to waste time because violence and counterviolence between the Palestinians and the Israelis will be the main cause for a collapse of the peace process. If we are really eager for peace, the Americans and the Europeans need to give it the necessary support. The developments that harm the peace process must, therefore, be contained. Here, Washington needs to play an effective role in confronting the grave Israeli practices, which began with the deportation of more than 400 Palestinians from their homes, and which continued through a security deterioration in the West Bank and Gaza and the prevention of Palestinians from earning their living by closing Gaza and the West Bank.

All comments and analyses about President Mubarak's important talks with American leaders in Washington highlight the fact that President Mubarak has largely succeeded in his mission for the good of the Arab nation, and in his campaign against terrorism and violence, which are not confined to Egypt, but constitute a problem worldwide. International cooperation to confront violence and terrorism will produce good results, protecting nations and states from chaos and instability, and allowing them to live in peace and security. In such a safe climate, the world community can cooperate to serve its objectives of development and progress.

Sidqi Addresses People's Assembly on Abu-Halimah Case

NC0704150393 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 4 Apr 93 pp 1,20

[Excerpts] Prime Minister 'Atif Sidqi stressed to the People's Assembly that Egypt is in the forefront of the states that denounce terrorism in all its forms, wherever it takes place. He also stressed that Egypt works day and night to fight and eradicate terrorism with all its strength. He added that Egypt believes in the need for international cooperation in confronting terrorism and that it adheres to the legitimacy and supremacy of the law. [passage omitted]

In a government statement to the People's Assembly, which convened yesterday under Speaker Dr. Ahmad Fathi Surur, Prime Minister Sidqi referred to the case of Mahmud Abu-Halimah, suspected in the bombing of the World Trade Center in New York on 26 February. He said that the rules of international law affirmed by the International Court of Justice bind all states to deal with persons claiming several nationalities according to their actual nationality, without taking into consideration other nationalities. Since Abu-Halimah is a U.S. citizen and works and resides with his family in the United States, it was inevitable to treat him as a U.S. citizen.

Prime Minister Sidqi said: The media recently dealt with and analyzed the case of Abu-Halimah, giving various interpretations. In view of this, and for the sake of the public interest, I find it is my duty to inform you and inform the Egyptian people through you of the following facts:

1. Mahmud Abu-Halimah is of Egyptian origin and carries U.S. citizenship. He also carries a German travel document no. 198349 issued on 6 August 1985. He is married to a German woman and his children are U.S. citizens. He resides and works in the United States. His brother, sister, and her husband live with him in New York State.

2. As a foreigner, he went to our consulate general in Jeddah on 10 March 1993 to obtain a visa to enter Egypt on his German travel document. In the forms he filled out, he said he was a German citizen.

3. Abu-Halimah arrived at al-Nuzhah airport in Alexandria from Saudi Arabia on 11 March 1993. He presented his German travel document to the airport's passport authorities. He was allowed to enter as a foreigner after his German travel document was stamped with the date of his arrival.

4. The Egyptian authorities had received from the U.S. investigation authorities information indicating that he is suspected of being involved in the bombing of the World Trade Center in New York. He was summoned to clarify the matter. He expressed his desire to return immediately, to surrender himself, and to acquit himself before the U.S. investigation authorities. The concerned security authorities did not object to this and he departed Egypt on the morning of Wednesday, 24 March 1993.

5. In the light of the several nationalities that Abu-Halimah carries, in view of his permanent residence in New York State where he lives with his wife and where all his financial interests and permanent work are, in view of the complete severance of his ties with Egypt since 1980, and in view of the fact that he entered Egypt as a foreigner, he is thus more closely linked to the United States. This proves that his real nationality is the U.S. nationality, which conforms with his actual status more than any other nationality he claims.

The People's Assembly decided to refer the statement to the Defense and National Security Committee to prepare a report on it. [passage omitted]

U.S. Sixth Fleet in Haifa Linked to Gaza Withdrawal

NC0804064493 Cairo ROSE AL-YUSUF in Arabic 5 Apr 93 pp 10, 11

[Article by Yusuf al-Sharif: "Will Haifa Become the Permanent Headquarters of the U.S. Sixth Fleet?"]

[Text] Why has the Israeli Government suddenly announced its intention to withdraw from the Gaza Strip? According to high-ranking Arab diplomatic sources, the United States has asked Israel to show respect for human rights, reduce violence in the Gaza Strip, and reach an acceptable agreement with Syria involving withdrawal from the Golan. The request was—for political, security, and moral reasons—necessary for the U.S. Administration to approve moving the Sixth Fleet's base to Haifa in accordance with a plan concerning the unification of U.S. and Israeli strategies in the Middle East, a plan that was discussed by President Clinton and Shim'on Peres.

The Israeli announcement raised fears and doubts among Palestinian leaders, despite the fact that a withdrawal from Gaza would provide the objective conditions for the declaration of a Palestinian state.

The Palestinian fears are probably rooted in the uncertain outcome of an Israeli withdrawal. The question of who is to rule Gaza will surface. Will it be the PLO, Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], or the Islamic Jihad Movement? The latter has become a major rival of Hamas in resisting the occupation.

Another question is: Where will the funds be raised for the transfer of power in Gaza? Gaza is home to 750,000 people who live in austere economic conditions. Fifty km long and 6 km wide, it is one of the most densely populated areas in the world.

Will Israel allow Iran to lend a hand in assisting and financing the strip, by dint of its organizational and doctrinal relations with the fundamentalist Palestinian parties? Will Egypt tolerate such a development?

Fundamentalist Palestinian parties welcome the Israeli offer, seeing it as a victory for the intifadah. Most Palestinians believe that Israel will withdraw from Gaza eventually, but are as uncomfortable with Israeli intentions as with the current dispute between Fatah and the fundamentalist groups in Gaza. The PLO has called a Palestinian national conference in Damascus this month to discuss the Israeli offer. It could not postpone the urgent task until the next meeting of the Palestine National Council.

'U.S. Security Agencies' Said Backing 'Abd-al-Rahman

NC0204134593 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 28 Mar 93 p 7

[From the "Pencil" column by Lam'i al-Muti'i: "The Creeping Ant; Who Are the Americans Fooling?"]

[Excerpts] A senior Egyptian official has said he knows everything that goes on in Egypt, even (a creeping ant), while a senior U.S. official has said that Shaykh 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman entered the United States on a visa issued by mistake! The two officials are accountable for these two inaccurate statements.

The U.S. official cannot deceive people into believing that Shaykh 'Abd-al-Rahman got a U.S. visa by mistake. Everybody knows it is extremely difficult for anybody to get an entry visa to the United States, let alone if it is for Shaykh 'Abd-al-Rahman, a well-known personality in Egypt and the entire Arab region. [Sudanese National Front leader] Dr. Hasan al-Turabi is widely known for his religious leanings. It is unreasonable to assume that the U.S. Embassy in Khartoum does not know Dr. al-Turabi and Shaykh 'Abd-al-Rahman.

Here is another trick. Shaykh 'Abd-al-Rahman entered the United States under the very nose of various U.S. authorities, resided in New Jersey with the knowledge of these authorities, and is performing religious rites at mosques there with everybody's knowledge. According to FBI reports released following the World Trade Center bombing in New York, those who visited Shaykh 'Abd-al- Rahman are known to the bureau too. There is no need, then, to try to fool anyone by claiming that Shaykh 'Abd-al-Rahman entered the United States, is living there, and is making statements against the Egyptian regime by mistake! [passage omitted]

The people are totally confused. Who is the shaykh working for? Who is financing him and his group? Why does the United States keep him there if it knows every single thing about him, his ideas, and his activity? We are not saying the United States is collaborating with the shaykh to overthrow the Egyptian regime. We are not saying the U.S. Administration supports the assassination of foreign tourists who visit Egypt. We are not saying that U.S. authorities are involved with the shaykh in attacks by his advocates against shops owned by Copts or in assassinating them. We are not saying any of these things, but the questions remain: Why did they let him enter the United States? Why do they let him continue his incitement against symbols of Western culture? Why

do they keep him after having admitted that he supplied them with false information? Don't try to fool us again by talking about democracy and the rule of law. He who is talking about knowing everything that happens in Egypt never bothered to give us a convincing answer to these questions. Many people have come up with various interpretations, some stranger than others.

But the closest to logic is the interpretation that says Shaykh 'Abd-al-Rahman is backed by U.S. security agencies, which facilitated his entry into the United States and which are making U.S. authorities turn a blind eye to him. But why? Those who advance this argument say one of the games of security agencies is to exchange benefits with other agencies. This means that the U.S. security agencies are doing a favor to other agencies, which have an interest in the shaykh. Everything, of course, has a price. The U.S. security agencies get the price from the other agencies behind Shaykh 'Abd-al-Rahman. The latter agencies are the ones manipulating Shaykh 'Abd-al-Rahman and his supporters, who also receive a price. Elaborating their argument, the advocates of this theory ask: Where does the shaykh get the thousands of dollars he is sending to his supporters in Egypt? Where do the sophisticated weapons and ammunition available to his supporters in Egypt come from? Where do the millions of dollars, which the lawyer of the World Trade Center bombing's suspect Muhammad Salamah talked about, come from? There must be a party with money available to it. This party must have an interest in protecting Salamah and Shaykh 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman as well. [passage omitted]

We do not want mere bravado from the government. If it truly knows everything, even if an ant is creeping somewhere, it must tell the people the truth about the U.S. stand on Shaykh 'Umar 'Abd-al- Rahman and who the terrorists are. It must name the country, or countries, that back terrorism. Is it Iran, Iraq, or Sudan? What is important is for the people to be in the know so that they can work with the government.

Columnist Sees CIA Link to Shaykh al-Rahman

NC0304103993 Cairo AL-AKHBAR in Arabic 2 Apr 93 p 5

[From "Everyday" column by Muhammad 'Abd-al-Hafiz]

[Text] The United States thinks it was a mistake to have allowed 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman to visit New York and enjoy the freedom and privileges of a U.S. citizen. It has been proven that he has connections to the defendants in the bombing of New York's World Trade Center, which left six people dead and hundreds injured.

I do not believe that the U.S. authorities and the CIA were unaware of the danger of "the shaykh." I do not believe that the CIA, with its agents deployed in all streets and quarters of the world, and its satellites that monitor everything, were unaware of the danger of the subversive religious rulings he made and his complicity in the killing of late President Anwar al-Sadat. I do not think that the CIA does not know Arabic, does not read the Egyptian and Arab newspapers, and does not watch CNN, which more than once broadcast statements by terrorist defendants that "the shaykh" was involved in their operations through incitement, planning, or subversive religious rulings.

Now after "the shaykh" has spent approximately three years in New York, the U.S. authorities have begun to wake from years of feigned slumber to discuss expelling him only after his complicity in the World Trade Center incident was proven. The U.S. authorities are considering expelling him not on charges of supporting terrorism, but because he entered the United States married to two wives, which is against U.S. laws.

I believe that we will soon hear about a new scandal revealing Shaykh 'Abd-al-Rahman's connection with the CIA, a scandal that will be called "al-Shaykh-Gate." This is the cost of the new world order that America solely leads.

Mosad Role in World Trade Center Bombing Alleged

NC0504145393 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 2 Apr 93 p 3

[Report by Mahmud Bakri]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] In the days after the bombing of the World Trade Center in February, the name of an Israeli woman, (Yosi Hadas), was mentioned. The name soon disappeared amid the uproar of the Zionist campaign against the Arabs and Muslims.

(Hadas) is an Israeli Mosad agent, who, along with another female agent, played an important role in planning the explosion and then attempting to accuse Islamists of carrying out the attack.

According to information, (Hadas) and her partner arrived in the United States in January. They tried to shroud their visit in secrecy, claiming they were there as tourists. The two women met several Mosad agents and some Jewish organizations' leaders during their visit, which ended exactly three days before the explosion. Two Mosad agents placed the explosives inside the World Trade Center. Reports say the two have U.S. nationality.

Mosad agents played an important role in trying to accuse Arabs living in the United States of carrying out the bombing. Mosad agent (Hadas) held contacts with Jordanian citizen Muhammad Salamah and tried to arrange a meeting between him and Mosad agents. But Salamah refused to go, although he did not know the real role of (Hadas) or her true identity. Reports say (Hadas) asked Salamah to go to the insurance company to reclaim the $400 deposit on the vehicle.

During the investigations with Salamah, the Israeli woman's name was mentioned. He admitted his contacts

with her, but the investigating authorities in the United States omitted her name and ignored her role in the operation.

Reports indicate that the Israeli Mosad conveyed to the American investigating authorities, most of which are under Zionist influence, the evidence and information accusing Arabs and Islamists of committing the attack. Meanwhile, the Mosad smuggled its agents who perpetrated the incident to Israel via Britain on the pretext of tourism.

In light of information on the role of the Israeli Mosad in the bombing of the World Trade Center, U.S. President Bill Clinton timidly referred to this during his meeting with Zionist Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin, who visited Washington on 8 March. Rabin rejected any accusations against the Israeli intelligence services, indicating cooperation between the CIA and Mosad and Israel's great pride in this intelligence cooperation. [passage omitted]

Sudan Called 'Hireling' of 'Foreign Terrorist Regime'

NC0704115893 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 5 Apr 93 p 9

[Editorial: "Conspiracy Series"]

[Text] The al-Bashir-al-Turabi government in Sudan continues its unprecedented schemes against Egypt in a desperate attempt to score false victories and deceive its people with a series of lies and false accusations against Egypt, its main supporter and pillar. It seems that this government, with its matchless record of wasting Sudan, handing it over as easy prey to those with ambition, and turning it into a sabotage base for them in exchange for Iranian petrodollars, enjoys dealing blows to Egypt, certain that Egypt's feelings toward the Sudanese people and its eternal ties with them will not let it answer back. Continuing its foolish and arbitrary measures, which enemies would not even undertake, and without reason or shame, it expelled members of the Egyptian education mission, closed the Cairo University branch, intensified its lies and campaigns on Hala'ib despite existing agreements, and finally detained the head of the Egyptian community in Khartoum to "swap him" for eight Sudanese, who, it said, are held in Egypt in connection with investigations. This hateful measure—detention without charges—and the mistreatment, blackout on detention procedures, and prevention of contacts with him not only run contrary to human rights and laws, but also constitute retaliatory measures to which no responsible government would resort. These are measures to which terrorist groups in the region are accustomed. Such measures are not pursued even in cases of extreme hostility, when only "personae non grata" are expelled. But to jump on an outstanding figure, who in this case represents all Egyptians, without any charge, and to use him as a "hostage", as gangsters who kidnap do, shows the al-Bashir-al-Turabi government's links, whether it likes it or not, with the foreign terrorist regime. In its deals with this regime, this government has gone as far as to become its cheap hireling, working against its northern neighbor. We ask the people of the Nile valley to be patient about this common predicament, because there is always tomorrow.

'Foreign Elements' Implicated in Terrorist Incidents

NC0304151193 Cairo AL-AHRAM AL-MASA'I in Arabic 31 Mar 93 p 1

[Ahmad Musa report]

[Excerpt] I have learned that a high-level security organ has revealed in an urgent report it prepared in the past few days the involvement of foreign elements in the recent terrorist incidents and the detonation of explosive devices in a number of Egyptian governorates. The report said that these terrorist actions were part of the scheme drawn up by the foreign elements in collaboration with Iran to destabilize Egypt's security and stability and divert attention from the intransigent and repressive practices in their own countries.

An informed source has told AL-AHRAM AL-MASA'I that a few hours ago the security organs arrested a terrorist belonging to the al- Jihad Organization who is an expert in making and detonating explosive devices. The source said that this terrorist is being interrogated to learn who his partners is. According to the same source, his confessions might lead to the organziation's cells planning and scheming these crimes. The security organs are doing all they can to reveal all the terrorist details.

The security forces are interrogating four Africans, including a Sudanese, who were arrested in the Pyramids area following the incident there yesterday, to determine if they were involved. The four are: Badr-al-Din Muhammad al-Sayyid al-Sha'ar, a Sudanese worker; Mamado Waghi, a Malian student in al-Azhar University; Sayyid Ben Musa, a Malian student in al-Azhar; and 'Isa Danieli, a Malian student in al-Azhar. The Sudanese worker pretended to be insane during his interrogation, which raises many questions. [passage omitted]

Western Media 'Propaganda' on Terrorism Denounced

NC0604090693 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0435 GMT 6 Apr 93

[From the Press Review]

[Text] In its editorial today under the headline "Facts Speak Out", AL-JUMHURIYAH comments on President Husni Mubarak's remarks during his European tour. The paper says that some Western media have deliberately been trying to exaggerate the reports about terrorist crimes in our country. The paper points out that many have hastened to exploit these incidents to spread poisonous propaganda designed to undermine tourism

in Egypt. The development of tourism opens wide horizons, as our country enjoys unique archeological treasures not to be found in many other countries.

The paper notes that while some Western media have sought to spread their poisonous and harmful propaganda, they have deliberately ignored the crimes and incidents that tourists face in many countries. They also ignore the reports about major terrorist incidents in these countries, which are unparalleled in our country.

The paper emphasizes that there is no danger to tourists in Egypt. What happened was transient, and any attempt to exploit these incidents to undermine tourism in our country will fail.

Search for Group Said To Specialize in Explosions

NC0504141893 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 2 Apr 93 p 1

[Report by 'Abduh Hasanayn]

[Text] A security body has distributed a booklet among security organizations in the governorates on the infiltration of Egyptian territory by a terrorist group. The security body asserts that the group specializes in blowing up sensitive locations using booby-trapped cars. The book describes the group's 17 members.

The security body requested an intense investigation to find the group members and ordered tighter security measures around public buildings and significant sites, where it advised changing inspection procedures.

A responsible source said the group seeks to use strong explosions in public installations to force the government to release detained extremists. The security body demanded that fugitives implicated in extremism cases be caught quickly lest they cooperate with the infiltrating group.

Muslim Brotherhood Official Explains Afghanistan Visit

NC0504140493 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 2 Apr 93 pp 1, 9

[Text] Mustafa Mashhur, deputy general guide of the Muslim Brotherhood, has denied his visit to Afghanistan was secret or aimed to support one Afghan Mujahidin faction against another, as government newspapers alleged.

He said his visits to any country are always public and that the Muslim Brotherhood's mediation with Afghan mujahidin factions was announced in advance but that government newspapers ignored it.

Mashhur said his relations with the Afghan mujahidin leaders are not new, but go back several years. Some mujahidin leaders lived in Egypt and studied in al-Azhar.

He said that contrary to government newspapers' allegations, the Muslim Brotherhood's mediation did not aim to support one party against another, but to spare the blood of Muslims, cement their ranks, and stabilize the situation in a fraternal country.

He said the mediating team met all the mujahidin leaders, gave them advice, preached brotherhood, and urged them to unite, obey God's orders, and implement agreements reached in Pakistan and Saudi Arabia.

On 30 March, the newspapers AL-AHRAM, AL-AKHBAR, AND AL-JUMHURIYAH published a report alleging that Mashhur paid a secret visit to Afghanistan and met Afghan leader Hekmatyar. The newspapers said the visit aimed to strengthen the faction of Hekmatyar, who they described as extremist.

'Intellectual Terrorism' at Cairo University Claimed

NC0304115193 Cairo AL-AHALI in Arabic 31 Mar 93 p 11

[From the "Issue for Discussion" column by Faridah al-Naqqash: "Terror Excommunicates a Professor"]

[Excerpts] Intellectual terrorism, acting under the cloak of religion and seeking to give moral justification to armed terror through religious rulings, succeeded, under the cover of darkness, in dealing a severe blow to the freedom of research, thinking, and belief. This happened when Cairo University's Council held an urgent and extraordinary session two weeks ago in which it rejected the promotion of Dr. Nasr Hamid Abu-Zayd to full professor.

The decision, which is a scandal in every sense of the word, was based on accusations that Abu-Zayd is an atheist. The accusation was made in a poorly-written report prepared by Dr. 'Abd-al-Sabur Shahin. Some professors have regrettably signed the report despite the fact that it contradicts their declared and written opinion about Dr. Abu-Zayd's academic work. [passage omitted]

Cairo University has thus been thrown back 70 years, to the time when the Education Ministry referred [novelist, academician, and later minister] Taha Husayn to trial for his book "On Pre-Islamic Poetry" because of questions about his faith rather than his scientific method. [passage omitted].

Egyptian intellectuals and democrats from all leanings are called upon to confront this scandal that puts the very core of our intellectual life in peril. [passage omitted] Credit must be given to the Arab Language Department, the Literature College of Cairo University, and Dr. Sayyid Hamd al-Nassaj, however, for refusing to give in to blackmail.

Musa Receives Message From Russia on Peace Process

NC0204155793 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1244 GMT 2 Apr 93

[Text] Cairo, 2 Apr (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has received a message from Andrey Kozyrev, his

Russian counterpart, concerning Russian diplomatic efforts to spark the Middle East peace process.

The Russian ambassador to Cairo handed the message to Ambassador 'Ali Mahir, director of the Foreign Minister's Office, today. Ambassador Mahir transmitted the message to Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa, currently in London as part of the official delegation accompanying President Husni Mubarak.

Spokesman Welcomes Somali Conference Achievements

NC0404144593 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1313 GMT 4 Apr 93

[Text] Cairo, 4 Apr (MENA)—The Arab Republic of Egypt has greatly welcomed the positive and important results achieved by the Somali national reconciliation conference that convened in Addis Ababa recently under UN auspices and with the participation of the Arab League, the Islamic Conference Organization, and the OAU. A Foreign Ministry official spokesman said that the reconciliation conference resolutions will pave the way for the restoration of stability and security to fraternal Somalia. He noted that while Egypt congratulates the various Somali parties on this great accomplishment, it expresses its full readiness to cooperate with all the sons of Somalia to contribute to international efforts intended to reconstruct Somalia to emphasize its standing in the international community and enable its people to live in security and stability.

Columnist Calls For 'Daring' Political Reform

NC0704122993 Cairo AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 5 Apr 93 pp 14, 7

["Through the Keyhole" column by Kamil Zuhayri]

[Excerpts] Wisdom has suddenly descended on the government. Its wise men have finally discovered that the government has been absent, the opposition parties have been forced to be absent, and that the carpet was about to be pulled out from under the government and opposition's feet in the face of disoriented and disorganized violence, which threatens stability.

Suddenly they admitted that the reasons are more complex and profound than what is being said and are political and social. They finally said the disregarded rural areas, the exiled governorates, the slum areas in Cairo, the continuing unemployment, the inability to employ university graduates, the state's inability to provide proper health, educational, cultural, housing, and transport, and the spread of bribery, lack of discipline, and corruption are among the deeprooted reasons for the worsening of this serious violence.

More serious is that they discovered inability alone was not to blame. They discovered other reasons, such as corruption, particularly corruption that is provocative, using sex and abusing authority, which ultimately affects the authority's image and the sanctity of the public post.

So the reasons are numerous and no longer a secret. Easy propaganda that spread among us has become useless. As soon as a problem appears, we hasten to say we are not alone in this. If the people complain about high prices, the electronic brains hasten to provide long lists of other states that are suffering from high prices. If the people complain about any problem, the government's rescue teams hasten to provide long lists of problems and crises outside Egypt in line with the saying: "Seeing the misfortunes of others eases your misfortune."

Wisdom has finally descended on the government. It recognized the deeprooted social and political reasons. But disagreement persists on the solution. The first and major obstacle is the government's hesitation to launch major political reform for which we called some years ago. The government adheres to the old, easy slogan: a strong government and a weak opposition. The government still seeks to freeze the legitimate and open opposition parties formed according to the Constitution and the parties law and to keep them as nothings on the left of the government. [passage omitted]

We need what we called for long ago: We need a daring political reform to strengthen the government and the legitimate opposition to defend legitimacy, stability, and the citizen's rights.

SLP Leader Interviewed on Party Split

NC0504122793 Beirut AL-SAFIR in Arabic 1 Apr 93 p 8

[Interview with Socialist Labor Party, SLP, leader Ibrahim Shukri by an unidentified AL-SAFIR correspondent in Cairo; date not given]

[Excerpts] [AL-SAFIR] Your differences with [rival contender for SLP leadership] Ahmad Mujahid began in 1989. Why have these differences taken such a dramatic twist recently?

[Shukri] You are right. The dispute with Ahmad Mujahid, or the "split" that Mujahid claims to lead, goes back to 1989, when Mujahid presented to the Committee on Parties Affairs certain arguments that he called the fifth congress appendix. The six congress was then held, and the committee refused to accept Mujahid's claims. Recently, however, the committee has asked us to hold another congress. Our response was immediate. We got in touch with officials to explain the situation. We also filed a request with the Public Prosecution Office to prevent the convocation of this suspect conference. The party also filed a court case against Mujahid and the interior minister, who is the official in charge of implementing the rulings [not further specified] and giving permissions to party meetings, in line with the emergency laws.

What worried us and prompted us to take all these precautions is what happened to the Misr al-Fatah Party, where

things [the replacement of leadership] began with a suspect congress, like this one. Mind you, the congress was going to take place at the Agricultural Museum conference room, which is normally used for scientific purposes pertaining to the museum and not rented out for public functions. It certainly cannot be used without the permission of Agriculture Minister Dr. Yusuf Wali, who is also the secretary general of the National Democratic Party. Dr. Wali must have been consulted about that.

We always new there were many government and security officials who wished to "stifle" the voice of the Labor Party and its newspaper, AL-SHA'B. This is true now more than ever, because we speak for the underdog and oppose the government frequently. We opposed the government on the law on professional associations, police excesses, and the emergency laws.

One reason, in addition to the above, may be the driving force for the campaign against our party; namely, our Islamic position.

[AL-SAFIR] If we go back a little, I may be able to demonstrate to you the validity of Mujahid's cause against you. Mujahid claims you caused the split in the party and that your supporters are the dissidents. It is known that prior to the division, the Labor Party had socialist inclinations. Then, you suddenly steered it in the Islamic direction.

[Shukri] This is untrue. With all due respect, Mujahid was not a founder of the SLP. He joined the party during the 1984 elections. He got on the SLP ticket because candidates were not allowed to run for elections except on party lists then.

Our program has not changed. Ours is the only party that always discussed the need to formulate laws according to shari'ah. This has been on our program since day one. We fought the 1984 elections under the slogan "government through shari'ah." Mujahid also ran under this slogan. He did not oppose it then. We confirmed this slogan in all our meetings. Even in the 1987 elections, our slogan was "Islam is the solution." Mujahid contested these elections under that slogan and did not denounce it. So, what has changed? He has changed. He discovered that it is in his interest—for reasons I do not wish to discuss—to take that position.

[AL-SAFIR] You frequently argue that the "security forces" interfere in your party. Why do the security forces adopt this attitude toward you? Why not the National Progressive Unionist Grouping or the Nasserists, for instance?

[Shukri] We have opposed the government on basic issues. We opposed its policies during the Gulf war. When it boycotted Libya, we contacted the Libyans and sought to reestablish ties. When Syria was boycotted, we visited Damascus. Our position on Sudan is markedly different from the government's. For us, Sudan is something basic. We have always believed that an Egyptian-Sudanese union is the sound foundation of any Arab unity.

[AL-SAFIR] Ahmad Mujahid's conference adopted decisions deposing you as party leader, removing 'Adil Husayn as chief editor of the party's newspaper, and restoring the party's socialist character. The events that followed this conference and your continuing as SLP leader suggest that a deal was made between you and the government.

[Shukri] No official, on any level, contacted me on this. It is not true there was a deal. We see the opposite to be true. The government's insistence on implementing the Professional Associations Law in the case of the Journalists Association is part of the fight and measures it launches, as if it is trying to hint that Ahmad Mujahid is always in the wings ready to take over. We have not altered our convictions. We express our views on every issue.

[AL-SAFIR] Let us move to another issue. What is your attitude toward "terrorism?" Some people describe you as the extremist group's "rear line."

[Shukri] To put it simply, this view probably resulted from our opposition to government terrorism before the people's. We reject all terrorism. The continuing enforcement of the emergency law is terrorism against the public. Amending some of the clauses of the penal code in what came to be called the "antiterrorism law," which fails to specify that terrorism must be armed terrorism, infringes the people's rights. According to these amendments, the police were given powers that formerly belonged only to prosecutors and prosecutors were given powers that used to be the premise of the courts.

[Al-SAFIR] Don't you believe that the threat to the economy necessitates measures that might not otherwise be normal?

[Shukri] We have a clear stance against "terrorism" but we do not believe stiffer penalties will stop the violence. Islamic culture must be spread and the propagation of ideas that provoke religious people must be halted. Social and economic ills must be cured, especially unemployment and soaring prices. The government believes that security action and "opening fire to kill" form the ideal solution.

[AL-SAFIR] Your arguments are logical but this does not stop the numerous accusations that—through the newspaper AL-SHA'B—you fail to condemn extremism and terrorism and support change by violent, not peaceful, methods.

[Shukri] These are unjust accusations. We condemn violence, whether it is carried out by the security forces or some deviant youths. In our newspaper, we unambiguously state our position to warn the officials.

[AL-SAFIR] When you equate the security forces' terrorism with that of some youths, as you call them, this implies a justification of what these young men do. Your attitude to tourism does not show a clear position, as you have claimed.

[Shukri] We believe that some youths have been misled and we must start a dialogue with them. We cannot understand why [the government] refuses to have a dialogue with young men aged 19-21, that is, students, intermediate-level school graduates, or young men who are just beginning their working life. We can understand refusal to speak to Shaykh 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman but not to these young men. Our party does not oppose tourism, as long as tourists do not contradict Islamic shari'ah. The SLP will not defend those who commit violence and terrorism directed against tourists and Egypt's stability. [passage omitted]

[AL-SAFIR] Many questions have been raised about your relationship with some states, particularly Sudan and Iran, and about your consistent support for the two regimes. This, coupled with the continuous publication of advertisements in AL-SHA'B, has led some to accuse you of receiving funds from these states.

[Shukri] This is nonsense. I don't sell principles for temporal purposes. Had our purpose been money, we would have gone along with those who pay and those who received money from the Gulf. Iran and Sudan are something else. There was an Islamic revolution in Iran that we had to study and get to know. Our position on Sudan is clear, principled, and basic, which prompts me to ask: Why do they think money is behind every position?

[AL-SAFIR] But was it not strange that you supported Iran against Iraq and then supported Iraq against Kuwait?

[Shukri] It was not like that. When the Iraq-Iran war broke out, we said it was a satanic war from which no one would benefit except satan. We said Iraq was wrong because it started the war and Iran was wrong because it did not respond to Iraq's repeated initiatives to end the war. So we did not support either side. But to say that we are Arabs and must stand against the Persians is undoubtedly great sedition, which was put down long ago—sedition between the Shiite and Sunni or between the Persians and the Arabs.

When the Gulf crisis broke out, we denounced Iraq's position before the Egyptian Government did. But when signs appeared of the Western conspiracy to destroy Iraq as a power and as a regional bloc that can support the Arab position and when the Arabs were placed on one scale and our enemies on another, we had to have a different position. This was the declared, known position that proved to be sound and correct.

[AL-SAFIR] What about your position on Sudan?

[Shukri] Can Sudan offer us assistance or does it need it? This clarification is necessary from the start. I must add: We watch Egyptian-Sudanese relations with extreme interest and concern, because we think there are parties that want to disturb our relations with Sudan. We in our party think that a strong Egyptian- Sudanese relationship means greater opportunities to develop the people of the Nile valley in the north and south. This has been our position throughout time. Before independence, Isma'il al-Azhari would come to Egypt as our guest. [passage omitted]

NDP 'Mending Fences' With Opposition in Reelection Bid

NC0304161993 Cairo AL-AHRAM WEEKLY in English 1 Apr 93 p 2

[Report by 'Abd-al-'Azim Darwish: "NDP: Mending Fences"]

[Excerpt] The ruling Nationalist Democratic Party (NDP) has delegated to its parliamentary majority the task of mending the broken fences between it and the opposition parties. The NDP hopes that a forthcoming [People's] Assembly debate on terrorism, on the basis of a report by a special parliamentary committee, will reopen the door of dialogue with the opposition.

Relations between the NDP and the opposition soured after the Assembly, during the past few months, passed two laws that imposed curbs on the activities of political groups and laid down guidelines for professional syndicate elections. The two laws came under fire from the opposition parties and press.

Although mending the broken fences between the NDP and the opposition is bound to be difficult, it is not deemed to be impossible. The two sides share the conviction that confronting terrorism is a national necessity and everybody's responsibility.

In a gesture of good will to the opposition, NDP Assistant Secretary-General Kamal al-Shadhili said: "The NDP is prepared to submit to the Assembly any draft law, which is the subject of agreement between the majority and the opposition, for dealing with the phenomenon of terrorism." Al-Shadhili appeared to imply that the NDP is not keen to push any new legislation through the Assembly unilaterally—which is what it did with the laws on political parties and professional syndicates.

In seeking to improve relations with the opposition, the NDP seems also to have in mind the forthcoming re-election of President Husni Mubarak for a third presidential term. Under the constitution, Mubarak must be nominated by at least two thirds of the Assembly's members. Then, the nomination will be put to the people for approval in a nationwide referendum that must be held at least two months before the President's term expires on 13 October.

The NDP would like the Assembly's nomination of Mubarak for a new term to be made unanimously or with near unanimity.

According to political analysts, the NSD's objective appears to be within reach—unlike six years ago when the leftist National Progressive Unionist Grouping

[NPUG] (al-Tajammu') objected to Mubarak's nomination for a second presidential term. At the time, al-Tajammu' said it did not object to Mubarak's person but to the fact that he did not commit himself to a specific programme of action in advance of the elections.

The NDP had initially invited the other opposition parties to open a dialogue on terrorism but it stepped aside afterwards in favour of a specially-formed parliamentary committee to which the task was assigned. "It is not important where the dialogue takes place but how to confront terrorism," al-Shadhili said. [passage omitted]

Libya

AL-JAMAHIRIYAH: 'To Hell' With Butrus-Ghali

LD0704140893 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1132 GMT 7 Apr 93

[Excerpts] Tripoli, 7 Apr (JANA)—Here is the text of the article which the AL-JAMAHIRIYAH newspaper, issued by the general establishment for the press at the General People's Committee of Information, Culture and Jamahiri Mobilization, published under the title: "To Hell With You and Your Seventh Article"

[UN Secretary General] Butrus-Ghali's statements revealed that the United Nations no longer constitutes the guarantee and the deterrent against the occurrence of universal or regional wars which would threaten the world basis and stability which the people of earth believed that they had actually achieved with the creation of the United Nations. Butrus-Ghali mentioned that the Security Council adheres to the letter of the resolutions, but did not mention that there is no clear text included in Resolution "731" demanding that Libya surrender its citizens to America or Britain. Butrus-Ghali has forgotten to refer to the literalism implied in the two resolutions "425" and "799" which were issued against the Israelis, unless he thinks that literalism has different standards and conditions which do not apply to the Israelis, but do apply to the Libyans. That double standard has destroyed the remainder of the United Nations and blown up what is left of its Charter, and if the issue was connected with the status of Resolution "731" under Article 7 of the UN Charter, then that was a grave error, responsibility for which is borne by the United Nations and all the peoples of the world. This is because Article 7 is used in cases of threatening peace, and cases of aggression, and two ordinary Libyan citizens cannot be considered suspects by mere suspicion of a threat to world security and peace. [passage omitted]

Should this logic become prevalent inside the international organizations, then to hell with Article 7, and we can never acknowledge it, and we cannot confess to this problem which was wrongly placed under Article 7, and which should never have been put forward to the Security Council because no one in the whole world has the right to demand from the Security Council the surrender of citizens from one country to another to try them. The Security Council has no precedent in making such a demand as the Security Council is not a civil court that looks into such criminal cases.

The UN secretary general today comes to remove the blur and wrench the illusions which flirted with the imagination of humanity to emphasize that the United Nations has been established to chronicle a new era called the new imperialism under the UN veil. In accordance with this they have falsely and with vilifications started today to call for the international legitimacy in which the United Nations had no effective role except as a framework within which the strong move to spread terror and fear for maintaining their interests in the world, even if that led to the use of force under the UN umbrella.

Butrus-Ghali's statement reveals the extent of his impotence to follow up on the UN resolutions passed against the Israelis, and his refusal to give us frank answers to the Israelis' rejection of resolution "799". [passage omitted] When the matter is connected with Libya, you hurried to unleash your prerogatives and your imagination to interpret international laws, elaborated on explaining the UN Charter, passed the sentences, and emptied what illusions you had left in your quiver until you put the UN resolutions in this literal situation ... and announced adherence to this literalism in what concerns Libya only, a literalism which we are aware you know nothing about, since you did not write a letter in it—as it came ready-made from the capitals of the West to be laid on your table and be stamped by the stamp of international legitimacy of which you are regrettably its guardian and protector.

Why have you shown impotence and cowardice in your dealing with the rest of the international resolutions, especially if the matter is connected with the Israelis? You shuddered as though you became insane, and the points of view multiplied, and you finally used your brain for arbitration in dealing also with the issues and solving them, issues none of which you have thus far solved. You are your own witness when you were confronted with the masses' indignation and anger, and if you think of stepping on Libyan or Iraqi territory you will see doom and graves. Curses be on you, disappointments chase you, and let failure surround you in every step you make, God willing, backed by the supplications of the starving and the sick Iraqi and Libyan children.

The newspaper added: We told you that if the matter concerned Israel you had to get the permission of your masters in Washington and London. We are making public for you what you are unable to disclose, and we know that you are well aware of and understand that. However, let us this time make it public on your behalf because we know the extent of your embarrassment had you said it yourself or had it been discussed: Namely that if the matter concerned Israel then it would be outside the duties of the United Nations and it would fall within the jurisdiction of the United States, which looks after

the headquarters of the United Nations and has the right to object by veto and by force [al-quwwah].

The Israelis have previously rejected over 30 UN resolutions, all of which are explicit, categorical, and binding. They would not find it difficult to reject a resolution like Resolution 799 which, as claimed by your Israeli masters, concerns a bunch of renegades [mariqin] and outlaws. In full democratic spirit and in all the democratic climate enjoyed in the state of the Zionists, the matter was submitted to the Israeli Supreme Court regardless of the international community with you as the secretary general of its organization.

If you were a man, Butrus-Ghali, you would have to go to Israel or America, apply for citizenship, become the representative at the United Nations of one of them and go to hell—you and your Chapter 7. You have the option.

Al-Qadhdhafi Holds Talks With Yugoslav Official

LD0704141993 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 1251 GMT 7 Apr 93

[Text] Tripoli, 7 Apr (TANJUG)—Libyan leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi today received Milorad Unkovic, federal minister for foreign economic relations, who presented him with a message from Yugoslav Government President President Radoje Kontic.

In the course of their long and friendly talks, Minister Unkovic acquainted al-Qadhdhafi with the latest stage of the crisis in the Yugoslav area, particularly with the situation in the former Bosnia- Herzegovina as well as with the activities carried out by the Yugoslav Government to achieve a peaceful and just solution to this crisis as soon as possible.

On this occasion the Libyan leader reiterated his view that Yugoslavia's disintegration was a result of revenge on the part of some global international factors for the role Yugoslavia used to play in its capacity as leader of the Nonaligned Movement and the Third World. This disintegration was feasible, however, only through the cooperation of separatist forces within the country. He also reiterated that Bosnia's separation from Yugoslavia was a tragic mistake.

In the course of the talks particular attention was paid to the tradition of friendly and close cooperation between the two countries, particularly in the economic sphere. On this occasion both sides confirmed their interest in advancing their cooperation. Minister Unkovic pointed out the problems encountered by Yugoslav firms in the Libyan market in collecting outstanding debts. The Lybian leader promised he would make a personal effort to find a solution for these debts. The talks were attended by 'Umar al-Muntasir, Libyan minister for foreign affairs, and Yugoslav Ambassador to Libya Dusan Simeonovic.

Zimbabwe Foreign Minister Affirms Support, Departs

LD0804112693 Tripoli Voice of Greater Arab Homeland in Arabic 0300 GMT 8 Apr 93

[Text] Foreign Minister of Zimbabwe Nathan Shamuyarira left Tripoli yesterday after talks with the brother secretary of the General People's Committee of People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison and International Relations. The talks dealt with relations between the Great Jamahiriyah and Zimbabwe and some international issues, particularly those pertaining to Africa.

The talks also dealt with the issues on the agenda of the African summit conference due to be held in Cairo.

The talks also dealt with the crisis between the Great Jamahiriyah and some Western countries. Views on this issue were identical; the foreign minister of Zimbabwe reaffirmed his country's support for the Great Jamahiriyah's position.

Sudan

Al-Bashir Says Egypt Blocking Efforts To End Hala'ib Issue

JN0804072593 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 8-9 Apr 93 pp 1,5

[By Ayman al-Safadi in Khartoum]

[Text] Sudan—Sudan Wednesday accused Egypt of frustrating its efforts to find a peaceful settlement to the two countries dispute over the border area of Hala'ib.

President of Sudan's Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir also said Egypt was hurting Sudan's international reputation by spreading rumours that the country is providing safe havens for terrorists and providing training to militant Islamist groups.

Speaking to reporters in Khartoum Wednesday, Lieutenant General al-Bashir said Sudan had tried to peacefully solve its problems with Egypt but Cairo had completely disregarded all Sudanese initiatives.

Tension between the two countries escalated in March when Egypt moved troops into the Hala'ib area after Sudan granted oil consession in the area to an international company.

Relations have deteriorated ever since with Egypt saying Khartoum is supporting militant Islamists.

Gen. al-Bashir, who came to power in a military coup in 1989, said a joint Egyptian-Sudanese committee negotiationg the Hala'ib conflict failed to achieve any progress because the Egyptian delegation to the committee said it has no power to agree on a solution.

Gen. al-Bashir told foreign reporters that the Egyptian government's animosity towards Sudan goes to the early days of the RCC because the council refused to be subservient to Cairo.

"Our brothers in Egypt expected the new regime in Sudan (the RCC) to be a subservient to Cairo, with its decisions taken there," he said. Attributing Sudan's alarming economic problems to the civil war in the south, Gen. al-Bashir said his government was seeking a comprehensive, lasting and just settlement to the conflict with Sudanese People Liberation Army (SPLA).

Peace is the only way to solve the conflict, he said. Military victories will not solve it, he added.

The Sudanese government and the leader of the mainstream rebel movement, renegade Colonel John Garang, are scheduled to hold preliminary talks this week on means of finding a peaceful settlement to africa's two longest running civil war.

In a joint declaration in Entebbe, Uganda, in February, the two sides agreed to hold a second round of negotiations in Nigeria.

Gen. al-Bashir said Sudan would resist what he said was an unlikely American military intervention in the south, but added that his government would seek American help in rehabilitating the war- ravaged south as well as legal advice on running a projected federation.

Gen. al-Bashir, however, played down the importance of a message he received from U.S. President Bill Clinton Monday, saying the letter was a routine one and included "nothing worth mentioning." He said the letter included a U.S. assertion that its relations with Khartoum will not improve until Sudan improves its human rights record, initiates democratic reforms and "moves away from terrorism."

American embassy sources in Khartoum told the Jordan Times that the U.S. was noncommittal on Sudan's request to help rehabilitate the south, conditioning any role in the peace talks on the approval of all sides to the conflict.

The sources confirmed that in the message, the U.S. pressed Sudan for improved human rights record and abandonment of terrorism.

Gen. al-Bashir rejected claims that the conflict in the south was a religious war saying that it was a political dispute that dates back to pre-independent Sudan.

The conflict first erupted in 1955 but was halted in 1972 when a peace agreement between the two warring factions was reached. It erupted anew in 1983 after the government of deposed Sudanese President Ja'far al-Numayri introduced Islamic law.

Gen al-Bashir and other Sudanese officials denied charges that Sudan was providing safe havens to "terrorist" groups. They invited international agencies to visit Sudan and conduct their own investigations.

Gen. al-Bashir also denied charges of ethnic cleansing or torture in Sudan, rejecting charges of widespread human rights abuses.

The Sudanese leader said Sudan was not militarily cooperating with Iran, adding that Khartoum's relations with Tehran were normal.

"We do not have any special relations with Iran in the military and security fields," Gen. al-Bashir, dressed in battlefield military uniform, told reporters. He denied the presence of any foreign military personnel in the country.

The Sudanese leader said Sudan would not allow political parties to operate in the country because political pluralism had proven its failure in Sudan.

"The Sudanese people have rejected military dictatorship, one party rule and political pluralism," he said.

The country is conducting what it calls "national conference" through which it holds election at district, governorate and national level.

"There is a difference between political pluralism and freedom. You cannot curb the freedom of the Sudanese," he said.

Gen al-Bashir said presidental elections are expected to be held in 1995 after regional elections are completed.

After the elections, he said, the Revolutionary Command Council, which he heads, will have no role to play in Sudanese politics.

Mubarak Statements in United States Considered

EA0704212593 Omdurman Sudan Broadcasting Service Network in Arabic 0315 GMT 7 Apr 93

["Political commentary"]

[Excerpts] For the second time during his current tour [in the United States], the Egyptian president has talked about Islamic groups, not in his country this time, but rather in the United States. The Egyptian president mentioned that parts of the World Trade Center building in New York would not have collapsed and about 1,000 [figure as heard] people would not have died if the United States had taken his advice concerning the activity of Islamic Arabs in the United States.

The Egyptian president added that the Egyptian Government notified the American intelligence agency of this, but, according to him, it took no notice. It is to be recalled, in this context, that the Egyptian president, the first time, affirmed that the Islamic groups in Egypt had a hand in blowing up the building. [passage omitted]

According to reports and events, it seems that the round [of discussions] between the Egyptian president and the American President will be surrounded by danger. Before the beginning of the talks, the executive director of the Middle East Watch organization submitted a letter to the American President in which he urged him to intervene with the Egyptian president concerning human rights violations in Egypt. The letter enumerated the violations. [passage omitted]

If the Egyptian president has come on this tour to ask the American Government, as he declared, to assist him to [word indistinct] Islamic tide, then the American Government was aware of the issue before the Egyptian regime. For its ally—Israel—rejected opening a political dialogue with the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] organization. [passage omitted]

Hence, what will the position of the Egyptian president be if the United States [words indistinct]?

Further on al-Mahdi Interrogation, Release

AB0704212093 Paris AFP in English 0048 GMT 7 Apr 93

[Text] Khartoum, April 6 (AFP) - Ousted Sudanese Prime Minister al-Sadiq al-Mahdi was arrested Monday [5 April] and interrogated by state security officials about his political activities, the SUNA news agency reported Tuesday.

Mahdi, ousted in a military coup in June 1989, was "summoned to the offices of the security apparatus... and was interrogated on his hostile political activities and movements and was set free soon after the interrogation," a "responsible source" in the security service told the agency.

SUNA said he was released after questioning.

The news agency was not specific about the anti-government accusations against Mahdi, head of the Ansar sect, the basis of the Umma party which was dissolved like all other political parties after the coup.

He had headed an elected civilian multi-party government which was toppled by General 'Umar al-Bashir.

A communique released later in the day by the Umma party and received in Nicosia said Mahdi had been questioned for a day and a night about recent speeches and articles he had produced as well as about his ties with foreign-based opposition groups.

Mahdi was jailed for about six months after the 1989 coup and was then placed under house arrest. But in recent months he has been granted rather more freedom of movement. He has not left Sudan since the coup.

Mahdi was arrested on Monday morning at his home in Omdurman, near the capital Khartoum by a group of soldiers under the command of two officers, an Umma party statement issued in London said on Monday.

Security forces also arrested three of al-Mahdi's aides, as well as four guests and his children.

They were taken to a base at Khartoum, where the three aides were released.

It was not immediately clear if his children and the guests, who included the former governor of the province of Kurdufan, Abdel Rassoul al-Nour, remained in custody.

No details about the other detainees were immediately known Tuesday.

Rebel, Government Factions Meet in Abuja

EA0704201093 Omdurman Sudan Broadcasting Service Network in Arabic 0430 GMT 7 Apr 93

[Text] The government's delegation to the preliminary negotiations with the rebel movement met, on 6 April in Abuja, Dr. Tunji Olagunji, representative of the Nigerian president who chaired the meetings of the first round of the Abuja negotiations. The meeting dealt with some issues concerning the Entebbe meeting between the government delegations and the faction of the rebel, John Garang.

The Nigerian president, Ibrahim Babangida, yesterday met, in Abuja, the rebel John Garang who arrived there within the framework of the preliminary negotiations.

Western Sahara

SADR Statement on Abdelaziz Visit to Italy

LD0504085393 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 2200 GMT 4 Apr 93

[Text] Saharan Arab Democratic Republic [SADR] President Mohamed Abdelaziz has been in Italy for about a week at the invitation of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Italian Chamber of Deputies.

A statement by the SADR Ministry of Information says that President Mohamed Abdelaziz held a series of talks with Italian deputies and a number of officials of political parties, including the leftist Democratic Party, the Socialist Party, the Christian Democratic Party and other leftist parties.

The talks enabled the Saharan president to acquaint the leaders of these political formations with the latest developments concerning the Saharan issue and the prospects of implementing the UN peace plan in accordance with the UN Security Council Resolution No. 809.

The statement also says that the Italian officials expressed concern over the delay in the implementation of the UN resolutions on the Western Sahara. The various political formations have demanded that the democratic choice of the Saharan people, which is basically embodied in a just and lasting peace in the area, be respected.

Oman

Yemeni Delegation Visit Called 'Successful'

JN0704190393 Muscat Radio Oman Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 7 Apr 93

[Excerpts] A session of official talks between the Sultanate of Oman and the Republic of Yemen was held at the Qasr al-Bustan Hotel this morning. The Omani side to the talks was led by His Highness Thuwayni Bin-Shihab, his majesty the sultan's special representative. The Yemeni side was led by His Excellency 'Ali Salim al-Bid, vice chairman of the Presidential Council in the Republic of Yemen. [passage omitted]

At the beginning of the Omani-Yemeni talks, His Highness Thuwayni Bin-Shihab delivered a speech. He welcomed His Excellency 'Ali Salim al-Bid and the Yemeni delegation accompanying him. His highness lauded Omani-Yemeni relations, saying they are good and will always be promoted in all fields in the service of both fraternal countries and peoples.

His Excellency 'Ali Salim al-Bid also delivered a speech. He expressed happiness at visiting the Sultanate and at the hospitality accorded him and his delegation by Omani officials. He hailed the achievements and developments realized between the two countries, the most important being the agreement on demarcating the common border, which was signed in the embodiment of fraternal understanding and the true intentions of both leaderships. Al-Bid pointed out that this agreement will be an important factor in bilateral contacts and cooperation, as well as in the freedom of movement for citizens. He also asserted that his talks in the Sultanate will increase confidence and open up wide horizons for the future. Al-Bid urged Arab leaders to heal the Arab rift and create an appropriate atmosphere to increase confidence and mutual understanding among Arab countries. In this regard, al-Bid stressed Yemen's high appreciation for the Sultanate's wise policy under His Majesty Sultan Qabus Bin-Sa'id and his good offices in the Arab and Islamic arenas designed to bring views on common issues closer, from an Arab and Islamic perspective.

Following the talks, Yemeni Foreign Minister Dr. 'Abd-al-Karim al-Iryani stated that the talks dealt with relations between the two countries and ways of bolstering and promoting them. They also dealt with selecting a route for the main road between the Sultanate and Yemen, which will pass through Samrit, Shahan, and al-Ghaydhah, so it can be built as soon as possible. The two sides also discussed the establishment of a free-trade zone between the two countries. In a statement to the Omani News Agency, the Yemeni minister added that a joint committee was set up between the two countries that will be led by the trade ministers of both countries. Dr. al-Iryani said that the two sides also discussed regional and international politics.

Concluding his statement, the Yemeni minister described the visit to the Sultanate by the Yemeni delegation led by His Excellency 'Ali Salim al-Bid as successful, adding that it will bring welfare and benefits to the peoples of the two fraternal countries.

United Arab Emirates

Pakistan's Sharif Meets Shaykh al-Nuhayyan

BK0804092393 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 8 Apr 93

[Text] Prime Minister Mohammad Nawaz Sharif held in-depth talks with United Arab Emirates President Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Al Nuhayyan at (Qasr al-Bahar) soon after his arrival in Abu Dhabi yesterday. The talks, which lasted for about two and half hours, were held in a most cordial and friendly atmosphere. Bilateral relations and regional and international issues are understood to have been the focus of the talks. The situation in occupied Kashmir also came under discussion.

Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Al-Nuhayyan paid warm tribute to the prime minister for his sincere efforts in supporting the people of Pakistan and providing for their well-being. In this connection, he prayed for the success of Mohammad Nawaz Sharif's policies. The prime minister thanked the UAE president for the support that he and the people of UAE have always given to Pakistan. He underlined the deep bonds of friendship and cooperation that exist between the two friendly and fraternal countries. He invited the UAE president to visit Pakistan. The UAE president said he would visit Pakistan as soon as possible.

A reception was hosted in honor of the prime minister after the talks. Earlier, the prime minister was accorded a warm welcome on his arrival in Abu Dhabi on a two-day visit to the UAE.

While overflying Iran and Oman, Mohammad Nawaz Sharif sent messages of good wishes to the people and governments of the two fraternal countries. In separate messages to Iranian President Hashemi-Rafsanjani and Oman's Sultan Qabus, the prime minister said we are bound by the Islamic faith, a common culture, and historic ties and share a common perception of the regional and international issues, as a result of which we enjoy brotherly and very close friendly relations. He hoped that our relations would be strengthened with the passage of time to the benefit of the people of these two countries and Pakistan.

Russian Defense Official Concludes Visit

JN0804094793 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0830 GMT 8 Apr 93

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 8 Apr (WAKH)—Viktor Glukhikh, chairman of the Russian Committee for Defense Industries, today left Abu Dhabi following a visit of several days to the United Arab Emirates. During his visit, the Russian minister met with a number of senior United Arab Emirates officials.

Saddam Receives, Addresses Delegation From Ninawa

JN0704173893

[Editorial Report] Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic at 1050 GMT on 7 April begins to carry a recording of "highlights of the proceedings" of a ceremony during which 617 tribal chieftains, Muslim and Christian religious scholars, and dignitaries from Ninawa Governorate in northern Iraq pledged before Iraqi President Saddam Husayn to remain "loyal and faithful to the soil of great Iraq, to defend it with blood and with all that is dear, and to defeat the attempts of coveters and ambitious parties with the Iraqi swords of right." The place and date of the ceremony are not given. Overall reception is generally fair with a few indistinct passages. Major points of Saddam's speech during the reception are covered by referent items.

The ceremony begins with songs in praise of Saddam Husayn. Afterward, an unidentified speaker begins to speak, welcoming President Saddam Husayn and noting the governorate's affection for Saddam as well as its patriotic sentiments, as demonstrated in the war with Iran and the "Mother of Battles." Then, the Ninawa Governorate delegation recites a "pledge of allegiance" before the president.

The proceedings of the ceremony are interrupted by songs and poetry readings in praise of Iraq and Saddam Husayn.

Afterward, an unidentified speaker, most probably the governor of Ninawa, delivers a 5-minute speech on behalf of the governorate. The speaker lavishes praise on the wisdom of Saddam Husayn, saying that the people of Ninawa will remain loyal to him.

An unidentified Muslim religious scholar then delivers a 9-minute speech welcoming President Saddam Husayn, condemning the allied "aggression," and noting the steadfastness of the governorate. This is followed by an unidentified Christian religious scholar from Mosul, who delivers a 10-minute speech glorifying Ninawa and its national unity. He notes the participation of Mosul residents in the war with Iran and the "Mother of Battles." This is followed by another unidentified speaker, who recites a 9-minute poem in praise of the "esteemed mujahid leader" Saddam Husayn.

At 1125 GMT, Saddam Husayn begins to speak, hailing and saluting the Ninawa delegation. Saddam recalls a visit he once made to al-Basrah in southern Iraq. Elaborating on this, he says: "During one of my visits to al-Basrah, I stopped in al-Qurnah. By accident, the results of the U.S. [presidential] elections were to be announced the very next day. The call for afternoon prayers was sounded while we were on our way to al-Basrah. Similarly, the call to evening prayers was also sounded while we were on our way. I heard some (?enthusiastic) youths as well as other people whom I visited in al-Qurnah. I observed that they were immensely interested in the outcome of the U.S. elections. Given the psychological state of affairs of our people, I judged that our people hoped for the defeat of Bush in the U.S. elections. When I performed the evening prayers, I entertained the idea of entreating Almighty God to fulfill the wish of the noble people, who had pinned their hopes on the defeat of President Bush. When I was about to utter my prayers, I was ashamed to ask God to grant me this. [applause] I told myself that this is only a minor issue. Whoever fears God must confine his prayers to major issues when he beseeches Him for anything. The affairs of life are all minor. It is my preference that whenever you entreat Almighty God, asking Him for anything, that your prayers request that God may allow you to become righteous so that your home may be in paradise, God willing."

The requirements of daily life, Saddam contends, are a matter which one can manage one way or another. However, he adds, the most important thing should be what he calls the major issues. He beseeches God to make paradise the final abode of all Iraqis.

Saddam Husayn goes on to say: "Given that God, the Creator whose forgiveness, mercy, and attributes we pray for at all times, and to Whom we should not pray with regard to the requirements of daily life, which we have mentioned, it becomes improper for any Iraqi to beg anybody in the world. [applause] I am hereby commenting on the first part of the speech delivered by the brother speaker, who was the last to speak. He addressed Islamic presidents and kings. Whoever of them is Muslim can see and hear. As for the unfaithful among them, their status reflects a completely different state of affairs. We are not supposed to show anybody where his own duties lie. They are not simpleminded people. The people you have addressed are presidents and kings. Do presidents and kings not hear, see, and know? Whoever among them does not hear, see, or know loses [words indistinct] attributes thereof. By the same token, whoever among them sees, hears, and knows, and fails to do good shall miss the course of guidance. We rely on God and appeal to the magnanimity of all Iraqis and good Arabs. We are not going to elaborate further on the meaning of good Arabs. Now, in the aftermath of the Mother of Battles, terms have taken on their own meaning. Before characterizing a ruler as a sincere one, we should recall the history of early Islam, which provided us with agreed- upon examples. When one says this or that person is a courageous ruler, we should recall a name in the history of early Islam. When one says, such and such people are a patient people, we should recall the siege imposed on Muslims in the mountain passes of Mecca, which continued for three years. In the aftermath of the Mother of Battles, God has aided Arabs, Muslims, and mankind a great deal through examples from the present you yourselves have provided. We say that the people must be patient, endure hardships, and be courageous, and that officials must be characterized with these or those characteristics. Examples embodying such traits have become apparently visible."

Saddam notes that Iraqis wish to see the UN-imposed embargo lifted at any moment. He adds that Iraqis must focus on their intrinsic potentials and endeavors. He underscores the importance of enhanced faith and work in the country. He expresses the firm conviction that people "will see how the edifices of evil will collapse one after another" and how Iraq will remain lofty.

Saddam, elaborating further on the speech made by the religious scholar, says: "Verily, my heart would ache if I were to hear an Iraqi appealing to Arab and Muslim rulers. By God, we will not do so. [applause]"

Discussing the same issue, Saddam says: "We will continue to perform our duties. Do not say at anytime: This or that person, do you not remember the embargo, when you and others failed to preform your duties as you should have done? This would be a shameful response. You are pillars of faith and I always deem you a lofty banner. [applause] I cannot put your traits on an equal footing with those of any other group. This is impermissible."

At 1150 GMT, Saddam Husayn ends his 25-minute speech to the Ninawa delegation. Saddam's speech is followed by several unidentified speakers, who glorify Saddam and underscore Iraq's pressing need for his leadership.

The recording of the proceedings ends at 1153 GMT.

Ba'th National Command Marks Party's 46th Anniversary

JN0704195793 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 7 Apr 93

[Text] The National Command of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party held a grand ceremony today to mark the party's 46th anniversary. The ceremony began with recitations from the Koran. Then, the audience stood to recite the Opening Chapter of the Koran to invoke God's mercy on the martyrs of Iraq and the Arab nation.

Afterward, comrade Jasim Muhammad Hamzah al-Rikabi, head of the National Command's General Secretariat Bureau, delivered a speech reviewing the party's militant march since its inception up until the present day. He also reviewed the party's role in confronting colonialist-Zionist schemes aimed at undermining the Arab nation's present and future.

Al-Rikabi added: The Iraqi leadership and people are to be credited, if only on account of their victory over the schemes of the evil powers, led by the United States and the Zionist entity, which targeted the Arab revolution's party. These powers, he noted, made desperate attempts to abort this party's experience in leading the liberation and pan-Arab struggle.

Poems expressing the pride of Iraqis and Arabs in their party and beloved leader struggler President Saddam Husayn were also recited during the ceremony, which was attended by comrade 'Adnan Dawud Salman, head of the Bureau of the Secretariat of the Iraq Command of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party. The ceremony was also attended by the comrade heads and members of bureaus of the party's National Command.

Ba'th Anniversary Statement

JN0704151393 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 6 Apr 93

["Text" of statement issued by the National Command of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party on the 46th anniversary of the party's establishment, dated April 1993—read by announcer]

[Text] O sons of the glorious Arab nation; struggling Ba'thists; free people everywhere. The Arab people and their struggling vanguards meet again to celebrate the 46th anniversary of the historic establishment of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party [ASBP]. By this celebration, the Arab masses enhance their interaction with the aims of the party's foundation, contemplate their struggle on the basis of its reasons of existence, and conjure up its heroic picture and deeds in order to build the nation's future. Thus, the Arab people can have an integrated, true picture of the party's broad lines, placing the pan-Arab cause within its framework of faith and struggle on the path of the movement of history.

This is a pan-Arab occasion with profound meaning. It is connected with the significance of the party's birth and its history. It is a pause for remembrance of the pure and deep beginnings and for drawing lessons on the road of renaissance and cultural awakening.

The 46th anniversary of the party's establishment comes during the days of steadfastness of the Ba'th revolution in proud Iraq under the leadership of the faithful helmsman, comrade struggler Saddam Husayn, in defense of the presence and future of our nation and to establish the pillars of its progress and renaissance regardless of the sacrifices and no matter how rapacious the forces of aggression might become and irrespective of the intensity of their hostility and unjust siege.

Our celebrations are also coupled with great determination to continue the march with the higher resolve and better performance stipulated in the 12th National Congress, the Mother of Battles Congress, which expressed urgent requirements for progress and pan- Arab action to explore the horizons of the historic phase and face the basic tasks of struggle that are similar to those which the party faced when it was laying its foundation stones. Emerging from the ranks of the Arab masses as an expression of their suffering, aspirations, and ambitions, the party is now leading the march of faith and jihad after more than 4 decades of its birth. Having wrested the banner of renaissance at its birth to save the nation from being lost, the party's responsibilities in national reform are now increasing.

On this occasion, Ba'thists remember with pride the sublime progressive and pan-Arab thought of their party's founder, Michel 'Aflaq, and are reviewing the

records of the Ba'th martyrs in order to fill their hearts with faith in their nation and enhance their determination and confidence in their march, which is proceeding toward their aims despite the harm done to it and the plots that are overwhelming it. The living organic connection between the Ba'th and the nation is the basic safety valve in resisting apostasy and overcoming obstacles. It is the secret of its vital struggle and its escalating movement despite all difficulties.

This is a special formula for the unity of theory and practice within the revolutionary Arab experience, enabling the Ba'th to create the formulas and means of using problems and obstacles as stepping stones to further progress of the Arab revolutionary movement and its struggling masses.

The Ba'th movement has from the beginning opened its own humanitarian path amid conflicting waves of ideas and ideologies that prevailed in the world. Thus, it passed a difficult test to prove its correct decisions and affirm its seriousness, that it is worthy of survival and creativity in the fields of independency, pan-Arabism, culture, and ideology.

The success of the Ba'th in this choice and test has been linked with the integrated and full awareness of the historical pan-Arab identity, giving it an immense capacity for expressing the nation's identity, and deriving from this nation its immense resources. Therefore, while striking deep roots in the national soil, it preserved creative interaction with the new contemporary developments with initiative, self-confidence, and active links with the concerns of the masses, and the unparalleled boldness to wage struggle across the Arab homeland.

The growth of the party was inspired by the values and needs of cultural awakening. It had the nation's message and its ancient history as the primary examples. Thus, the Ba'th was born out of the pan-Arab struggle, and its progressive ideology emanated from the concepts of the free, unionist, and humanitarian struggle. By virtue of its birth and originality, the Ba'th has been connected, body and soul, with the cause, and has become a real extension of the Arab's glory and an embodiment of its struggle for unity, freedom, and socialism by the methods of prolonged popular struggle. The Ba'th's vanguard organization was a model of fusion of thought and action, a true translation of the nation's abilities to overcome the Arab fragmentation in a scientific and practicable formula.

Forty-six years after its birth, the Ba'th has continued to hold fast to its mission. The Ba'thists now have a history full of struggle for the sake of Arab unity; freeing the nation from colonialism and alliances; liberating the Arab wealth from foreign, exploiting hands; organizing and mobilizing the masses to resist material and moral dearth and spiritual want, and creating intimate, healthy relations between the Arabs and their brothers in the country and between them and their partners in fate from the cultural and ethnic minorities based on the humanitarian outlook, the same fate, and active interaction free from oppression and injustice. This struggle is also aimed at extending bonds of mutual respect and exchanging benefits with the world's peoples and cooperating with them against the manifestations of trusteeship, occupation, and tyranny.

While struggling under these banners, the Ba'th has faced many threats and attempts to undermine and besmirch it. It managed, however, to resist these attempts, thus showing its constant ability to move from one course of struggle to another, to make splendid achievements. The 1958 unity between Syria and Egypt was the first unionist achievement in modern Arab history. Other achievements included the launching of the Ramadan and July revolutions, the nationalization of oil, protecting the eastern gate in the glorious Saddam's al-Qadisiyah [Iran-Iraq war], and the creation of a model to be emulated in its meanings and basic course in the Iraq of glory and sacrifices.

Then came the Mother of Battles with its historic meanings to confirm the nation's genuineness, rich and abundant resources, and readiness to face the challenges posed to its awakening. The Mother of Battles was also the outcome of releasing the nation's intellectual powers along the path of rebirth, notwithstanding the effort and suffering involved.

The Mother of Battles was also an extension of the birth of the Ba'th and a new leap forward, full of meanings of great faith and profound lessons of jihad, so that the nation can regain its cultural role after hundreds of years of dormancy and dependency.

O sons of our glorious Arab nation. O Arab strugglers: In this historic scene of the struggle of the Ba'th and the nation, the immortal Mother of Battles occupies a unique, special position, since it has translated Arab aspirations toward independence, progress, and establishing a distinguished cultural model as part of Arab self-fulfillment and need for progress.

This great confrontation has confirmed the triumph of principles and the power of justice over the inclinations toward hegemony, the falsehoods of aggressors, and their machinery of destruction. It has also revealed the gaps in the ranks of Arabs and within themselves, prescribed the appropriate remedy and safe path, and defined beyond any doubt the distinguishing characteristics of true patriotism, nationalism, and humanity, as well as the necessary conditions for proper faith and suitable leadership.

The Ba'th anniversary coincides with Iraq's steadfast position, the return of the aggressors, and Iraq's continuation of its vanguard role. The early signs of daylight have appeared. The faithful now have a model to pursue their march along a bright path for the future. It is the jihad of the patient, steadfast people in battlefields and construction arenas, led by the mujahid, Saddam Husayn, the symbol of Arab struggle and reviver of Arab glories.

The Mother of Battles has painted a picture for the future of the nation the way it wants it to be; namely, an expression of its message. Thus, it caused the long struggle march of the Ba'th to materialize. It also waged the most fateful battle against the usurpation of Palestine, colonialist divisions, economic control, dependency, lack of justice, and the unequal nature of the world order.

Thus, the Mother of Battles has truly become a program for pan-Arab awakening and real daylight toward progress. The Mother of Battles was a true promise of sacrifices and proof of Arab awakening potential, whose torch was carried by principled Iraq in the arena of struggle as a jihad vanguard to make preparations and act in a capable way.

Ascending Iraq is the cornerstone of Ba'thist awakening in its pan-Arab context, comprehensive universal dimension, deep-rooted civilization, and well-known ability to withstand difficulties and hardships for the nation's causes.

Colonialist and Western capitalist powers—employing traditional methods and thinking with a revenge mentality—were resolved to abort Iraq's pioneering role and destroy its power, when they saw that Iraq's awakening has turned into a nationwide program.

This giant leap has provided two main pillars: The existence of the Ba'th as a historical movement adhering to pan-Arab organization and mass depth; and the existence of an unmatched leadership representing the conscience of the nation, adhering to principles, and basing its conduct, stands, relations, promotion of human wellbeing, and revolutionary experience on pan-Arab interests.

The leadership of struggling Iraq has fought this confrontation in the spirit of the message and bearing in mind the cultural dimension of the battle of steadfastness in the face of a destructive cyclone of hegemony. Consequently, the Arab homeland witnessed a real awakening under which the masses regained their vitality and unified action after a long lull and negativism resulting from policies of oppression and the practices of reactionary Arab regimes against the masses, in addition to the fact that there was no strong model.

The Zionist theory of security was shaken for the first time when Iraq made good on its promise to strike at the usurping Zionist entity. Thus, the al-Husayn and al-'Abbas missiles hit this entity in the heart, restoring respect for the line of liberation and struggle, returning the Palestine question to the focus of international attention, revealing disregard for the rights of the struggling Palestinian people and showing how double standards have adversely affected their just cause. The valiant intifadah thus coalesced with the immortal Mother of Battles in the battlefield. The Mother of Battles, thanks to the objectives it upheld, turned into a global confrontation which showed the contradiction between world imperialism and the aspirations of other nations. It was a battle between people's right to liberation and progress on the one hand and the falsehood of hegemony and control over the fate of the world on the other. The trench of the Mother of Battles assembled Arab and Islamic forces of awakening, the free, the honorable, and the poor in the world. The other trench represented exploitation, tutelage, invading buildups, and brute injustice.

The essence of the nation and its true popular forces were seen best when they were defending the nation's reality, represented in struggling Iraq, exposing aggression, and resisting policies of war and destruction. Pictures of great support for Iraq and rejection of aggression were painted in the sky of Arab solidarity. Thus, the Arab cause triumphed and there was great room to establish solid relations with world public opinion to support Arab struggle.

Had it not been for this decisive round, which mobilized and toughened people, the falsification and propaganda of the new world order would have continued for a longer period, in the light of an aggressive onslaught that used hostile trumpets to impose hegemony over the world.

O Arab strugglers: The ideology of the Ba'th has come as a demonstration of the party's faith in the nation and its desire to entrench its militant movement and to link it with its cultural roots, its firm and deep spiritual pillars, the concepts of immortality, and the living spiritual continuity along with the bright pages of the past and the sources of cultural heritage. Islam has been the basis of the party's ideology and its understanding of the Arab humanitarian mission.

The relationship between Arabism and Islam has been a source of inspiration from which the Ba'th invokes ways of dealing with its problems as well as its genuineness and its spiritual power to continue the struggle, renew the purity of spirit and conscience as the message of Islam did with the early Arab Muslims.

This year marks the passing of half a century since the historic speech delivered by the Ba'th founder at the Syrian University auditorium on the birthday of Prophet Muhammad, in which he summed up the intimacy between pan-Arab and spiritual revivals, and the warm relation between Islam and Arabism, in terms of history and struggle in light of Prophet Muhammad's jihad and his defense of the principles of right and faith.

Islam grew up in the heart of Arabism, and the Arabs raised its flags and provided the examples of faith in Islam and the proper behavior. Therefore, Islam has demonstrated, in addition to the divine will, the concept of the historical need of an Arab revolution against falsehood and the Arab aspiration to unity, freedom, justice, and right. Islam has also demonstrated the pan-Arab and humanitarian concepts of the role, mission, and action of the nation in this life. At the same time it addressed humanity as a whole. Hence, Islam has maintained the nation's genuine pan-Arab concepts amid

circumstances of division and loss, and has accompanied the nation's nationalism in defending the Arab nation, and the call for jihad and liberation from colonialism.

Hence, the Ba'th has come as summation of the needs for liberation, unity, and pan-Arab revival from its position and its influential weight in the Islamic world's progress. The party has become the real representative of the Arab nation's conscience and objectives, and the best expresser of its problems, and the party whose struggle is qualified to lead the nation.

The Ba'th remained eager to invoke the experience of the past in a faithful and genuine manner, especially the points of strength and vividness in our heritage to arm ourselves within our present battle. This will be done without seeking protection from the shells of the past to obtain safety from temporary circumstances as a way of escaping reality and its facts, and instead of preparing for the requisites of civilized struggle and dialogue with the contemporary world, based on self-confidence and a renewing of the past with the message of the present.

The Ba'th has realized that a superficial return to traditions would not be enough. For the Ba'th's pan-Arab concept is connected with its spiritual, moral, and cultural dimensions as a formula for rebirth, stemming from Islam's revolutionary experience—as a spiritual fountainhead and the most basic reality in the makeup of the Arab character—which complements its own dimensions by establishing dialogue with the spirit of the age.

Thus, the Ba'th perspective is completed by understanding the fundamental facts relating to faith and the cultural message.

Understanding these aspects of the identity of the Ba'th and the nature of the current challenges will build a solid bridge for the mobilization of the Arab nation and Islamic world, as well as for the preparation of their living forces to set out and participate creatively in building a better future for mankind.

The current pan-Arab awakening has created a climate conducive to invoking and raising Arab political awareness to take the initiative in the future and unify the vision so as to grasp the newly emerging Arab and world realities and carry out the mission of our nation efficiently.

Faced with such requirements, it is natural to begin a dialogue with one's self and with others based on objective evaluation, constructive criticism, and understanding negative, defective phenomena and practices without arrogance or justification. It is also important to point out the drawbacks of strategic, unionist thinking and the requirements of Arab struggle to abandon the situation that made pan-Arab thinking ineffective, to keep harm away, and to remove distortions that affected pan-Arab forces throughout their varied experiences.

The fact that Arab and Islamic forces of awakening have reached this level of frankness and brushed aside minor differences to heed the fundamental contradiction between themselves and imperialism and Zionism is the right beginning to unite their joint efforts to face major questions and schemes of cultural hegemony.

O masses of the glorious Arab nation: The Ba'th march of struggle has been universally principled and characterized by clarity and awareness. It has also imbued strugglers with the values of the nation and brought them up ideologically. These characteristics have given the historical Ba'th movement a great ability to avoid deviation and enhance its status within the ranks of the people. They also sharpened the Ba'th movement's resolve to mobilize energies to serve the nation's struggle and remain loyal to its ideology, away from narrow-minded temptations and determination which is not up to the level of great historical action.

With all these virtues combined, the Ba'th assumed its role in bringing up youngsters and creating living struggle traditions which protected it from the negative aspects of corrupt realities and preserved its thrust under the most difficult circumstances, despite the nation's occasional setbacks.

Thanks to its farsightedness, the party foresaw Arab developments. Consequently, it managed to define the tasks of Arab struggle through mental efforts and preparation to ward off possible threats and pave the way for forces of progress and change.

The party adopted the policy of openness and positiveness in formulating its principles and dealing with the issues of today. This reinforced its capabilities for hard work and for actively dealing with various developments as they arise.

For almost 40 years, the party diagnosed the theoretical deviations and practical mistakes of the communist experiment, thus pinpointing some of its weak points and the signs of its dissolution. Therefore, it expected the failure of this experiment while it emphasized socialism as a pan-Arab, humanitarian goal that urges struggle for attaining justice and creating a climate for free and profuse thinking. The party continued to highlight the essence of the capitalist crisis that was enslaved by material values and controlled by standards of exploitation and the achievement of material supremacy. This led to an imbalance in the spiritual values of the communist experiment and a distortion of the cultural concepts of this experiment.

The party always emphasized that the crisis of the capitalist policy will be exposed when socialist applications are liberated from the shackles of ready-made formulas and ideological stagnation, and when it heads toward respect for spiritual ingredients and the release of basic liberties for man and society.

International developments proved the soundness of the party's principles on the relationship between progressive nationalism and human struggle, as well as the soundness of the course of independence and multiple centers of revolution around the world. Hence, Iraq's

Ba'th Party experiment played a prominent role in promoting and upholding the principles of independence and sovereignty, thus rejecting subservience and international axes while waging the toughest of battles.

This intellectual asset is food for the strugglers, and it renews their faith in the goals and strategy of the struggle to reinforce the critical cultural outlook of the current international situation and to deal with the various ongoing changes in the world, on the basis of international cooperation and respect for the independence of people, their special traits, and their legitimate aspirations.

In contrast, the capitalist regimes ignored their ills. After the collapse of the communist experiment in the Soviet Union and East Europe, these regimes directed their policies and discourse toward the reorganization of the international state of affairs in line with U.S. hegemony and unipolarity, as well as the imposition of complete control over the world under the slogan of unifying the world on the basis of a market economy and liberating it from ideological rules. Since these concepts are nothing more than an expression of the structural and methodical imbalance from which capitalism suffers, ignoring these facts will expedite the failure of this hegemonistic wave because it lacks credibility and stands against freedom, democracy, and human rights.

The capitalist regime will continue to manifest its contradictions, despite efforts to spread its problems and its comprehensive course. The imbalance in the world economy and the development of the competitive ability of its main centers will always lead to fragmentation, chaos, and a contradiction in the conflict of dictating economic decisions in a manner that harms the framework of global exchange and the very essence of the entrepreneurial initiative, which is the most important slogan of the so-called free economy.

These controversial dimensions, which were kept in check during the cold war, have started to impose themselves and create more tension in international relations, in addition to what the international community was used to during the past stage. This seriously affects the principle of balance, coexistence, human rights, and respect for cultural diversity.

Under unipolar hegemony, the policy of military intervention continues, the policies of states and their unity is violated, and collective security and peace-keeping instances as well as preventive operations are diverted to serve U.S. and Western designs. Meanwhile, commitment to environmental protection and the easing of tension is being avoided by maintaining enormous military expenditures and monopolizing the nuclear arsenal at a time when people's issues, bridging the gap between North and South, and helping poorer countries are being brushed aside. Hence, the new world order is again proving its imbalance, despite the new mask it is wearing.

These complications will expedite the formation of new world formulas that should unify the will of cultural diversity, human progress, and resistance to hegemony and the logic of force.

The Ba'th Party, a pioneer in calling for liberation, independence, and non-reliance on foreign international powers, is developing a stronger faith in the role of thought in repulsing political onslaught and cultural conquest, and in maturing the constituents of defending the nation's character, protecting its heritage and cultural option, and supporting its front of struggle, along with various other nations of the world.

O masses of our glorious Arab nation, O Ba'th strugglers, the features of the new pan-Arab stage have been clearly marked following the precise sorting [of bad and good ones] by the historic confrontation in the Mother of Battles. What characterizes the Arab situation most is the severity of contradictions between internal and external factors, something which led to the abnormal and illogical development of this situation.

At a time when joint Arab action is facing the plot of fragmentation following the revival of the bonds of subservience to colonialism, and at a time when the penetration of the official Arab situation reaches its climax, turning into a paralyzed formula and impotent tool, fragmentation and fabrication of divisions and quarrels go side by side with the squandering of Arab wealth. This wealth is squandered to pay for protection and military presence and to revive the Western economy. The obvious deterioration as well as drift and surrender of certain Arab regimes to foreign schemes and the widespread state of Arab and regional discord due to narrow- minded ambitions and expansionist policies by certain neighborly states revolving in the orbit of colonialism and bearing grudge against our Arab nation, do not reflect the true picture of the situation.

What is true is that the Arab homeland is being exposed to a sly and vicious onslaught by an international and regional alliance. Struggle, however, is recovering and preparing to resist the state of deterioration and attempts to liquidate the Arab cause and impose capitulation, regardless of the degree of organization and the level of national and pan-Arab reply.

The nation is passing through a stage of rebirth in Arab awareness based on a feeling of the importance of unity in confronting hostile schemes, pride in the Islamic Arab cultural identity, revival of collective memory that awakens the nation, and a deep sense of the importance of overcoming the challenges of science and technological development and defeating the monopoly of knowledge, all forms of division, and the chauvinism [preceding word in English] of cultural hegemony.

The spirit of jihad instilled in the nation by the Mother of Battles, as the first open clash with U.S. imperialism, moved the masses and broke the psychological barriers preventing a rejection of the fait accompli policy and a confrontation of brute force.

A close examination of history makes us admit that the Arab homeland is passing through a period of labor in which the chances afforded by the abnormal circumstances imposed by the imperialist- Atlantic-Zionist onslaught are retreating and diminishing. In the meantime, positive factors are accumulating and moving things forward.

The battle formula was radically amended when it was corrected by the Mother of Battles. Interferences, which were about to obliterate the nature of the previous revolutionary stage due to the capitulatory reactionary regimes' intrusion into the pan-Arab position by way of trickery, corruption, and the falsification of facts, have come to an end.

The Arab nation is forging its way ahead through its jihad-like determination to liberate Palestine, break the barrier of backwardness, promote the pillars and conditions of Arab life, and uphold the humanitarian progressive identity against the mentality of capitulation and remaining colonialist grudges. Iraq's splendid steadfastness and miraculous success in the battle of construction, as well as the Palestinian intifadah, will then turn into two wings of Arab awakening as they represent the will of struggle under the toughest circumstances of repression and media forgery that are meant to anesthetize the world's conscience and cover the crimes of aggression and systematic annihilation.

Iraq's steadfastness and the Palestinian intifadah have come to be an inspiration for Arab masses and have set an example for self-reliance and an innovative exploitation of struggle in the face of siege, aggression, and occupation.

The examples of Iraq and Palestine have unmasked the double standards of so-called international legitimacy and the international conspiracy against the Arab world.

Maintaining the blockade is irrefutable evidence of the bankruptcy of this conspiracy and the policy that has ceased to be a restricted measure limited to a certain circumstance. The blockade has become a weapon deployed to put a brake on the regeneration of the principles, values, and history of the Arab nation, and a bid to turn the international community against our nation to keep the former from identifying with and lending a hand to our worthy causes.

The blockade is directed not just at Iraq; it is banking on the weakness of the Arab position and using certain Arabs on behalf of a Zionist-imperialist design that seeks to outflank any Arab counteraction or cultural regeneration.

The Palestinian deportee issue has come to throw into sharp relief the ironies of so-called international legitimacy, and has spotlighted the cultural nature of our contest with the imperialist West and its tool and key base in the Arab world [Israel]—a duel that overlooks Arab rights and the legitimacy of their fight to determine their own future.

The course the deportee issue has taken shows the lengths to which the West is prepared to go in riding roughshod over human rights and justice, and disregarding integrity in the process of making and enforcing UN resolutions.

This inconsistency and hypocrisy on the part of world Zionism lies at the heart of the moral crisis in the logic of power politics—something that has not been lost on the Arab masses holding out in Iraq and Palestine.

Children of our dignified Arab nation: The wider the circle of confrontation in our pan-Arab fight with Zionist aggression and occupation that unleashed the possibilities of the masses, the closer these masses feel to the founding anniversary, since the battle is the perfect paradigm of the militant values that the party has epitomized since its inception.

In these memorable times, the heroic Palestinian Arab people are shedding their blood and the sweat of their brows on their streets and alleys, and in the refugee camps and detention centers as they strive to decide their destiny. By sticking to the valiant intifadah, the Palestinian people are, in effect, saying on behalf of the Arab nation that liberation is the one and only option open to them for deciding their own future.

On a mission of this magnitude depends the fortunes of the entire Arab nation—a mission that must be viewed from a strategic standpoint, the crucial confrontation, the preparedness of the nation, and the long-awaited opportunity, now that the intifadah and the Mother of Battles have dispelled the fog that had engulfed the tragedy of occupation, put an end to the manipulation of the Palestinian cause, and renewed faith in the inevitability of recognizing the rights of the mujahid Palestinian people.

The inexorable link between the victory of the Palestinian people and the pan-Arab struggle for liberation, and the preponderance of a combination of the two over enemy forces are benchmarks for various forms of political Arab struggle, since they are relevant to the Arab-Zionist fight.

What is sought now is to peddle acceptance of the elements of the theory of Zionist security after gratifying it with Jewish emigration and exploiting the results of the Camp David accords for advocating a regional solution and securing the Zionist- imperialist peace, which disavows the Palestinian cause as the essence of the conflict.

In the final upshot, these arrangements seek to block the road to any positive development in the interest of the Arab masses while their arena witnesses the beginning of a new pan-Arab reawakening, and while the state of affairs in the Zionist entity and its allies suffers from diversified complications which do not work in the interest of their future options.

In light of the current difficult state of affairs, the Palestinian struggle faces the task of safeguarding the unity of national ranks, closing the door in the face of infiltrators and those who fish in muddy waters as a guarantee for the perpetuation of the intifadah and the attainment of a suitable militant level for the Palestinian revolution, as well as for its objectives that will be in line with the challenges brought about by the Arab-Zionist conflict.

Masses of the glorious Arab nation, struggler Ba'thists, free men of the world everywhere: A thorough study of the Ba'th struggle emphasizes to the present generation the importance of consolidating the militant conduct to achieve a merger between issues of the Arab struggle and the challenges faced by the Arab masses, in all their countries, in a manner that will tackle them within the framework of the unity of struggle and as part of the overall pan-Arab concept.

The mobilization in the Mother of Battles was a call for shouldering responsibility and was an initiator of the pan-Arab reawakening which roused the popular state of affairs, closed ranks, and enhanced the sense of unity in the struggle on the level of all genuine Arab political and social forces and manifestations, irrespective of their ideological identity or political colors.

The consolidation of the popular struggle front is a sine qua non for unifying efforts in the Arab nation's battle against hegemony and military occupation, as well as against the perpetuation of the unjust blockade on Iraq, encouraging political, cultural, social, and trade union leaders to further develop their capabilities and methods, and to upgrade the level of their performance and steer the course of events so that it may serve the Arab nation's interests, starting with bringing pressure to bear on the decisionmakers for lifting the unjust blockade on Iraq and fulfilling their pan-Arab commitments toward Iraq, which had taken upon itself the task of defending the Arab nation.

New formulas should be developed; formulas that adopt a clearly outlined militant program to establish a pan-Arab popular front for uniting the Arab masses' struggle on the level of all Arab countries and on the level of the Arab homeland; a front that will comprise all the forces which abide by a stand that is hostile to imperialism and Zionism, and which seeks to form an alliance with global forces struggling against capitalist hegemony and to attain a new level in the sphere of liberating their potentials by organizing their ranks to confront new challenges.

Bolstering collective initiatives and joint popular action will result in significant strides in the right direction, after the militant platforms and popular institutions have made a large step toward expressing the will of steadfastness and resistance against aggression. Promoting these popular platforms and institutions on both the state and the pan-Arab levels, foremost among them being the Arab Popular Forces Conference, to enable them to shoulder their responsibilities, coordinate their action, perpetuate their movement, and engage in pan-Arab struggle will make them a real power in the historic battle of historic steadfastness. These facts remain a sign of the Arab people's ability to secure the requirements of battle and overcome the state of disruption to build future action inspired by the spirit of the Mother of Battles and its historic, principled steadfastness. This, in turn, will lead to a major awakening among the various factions of pan-Arab struggle.

Our party urges our nation's masses to carry out these vital missions, which require persistent struggle to preserve the democratic gains in various Arab arenas. It also stresses its support for the brave intifadah in the occupied territories and for efforts to resist all forms of imperialist military presence, agreements of protection and hegemony, interference in Arab countries' domestic affairs, and threats to pan-Arab security.

While placing these missions before the Arab masses and the nation's strugglers and friends, our party pledges to work as hard as possible to extend its hand to all honest people to achieve these militant missions.

O Arab strugglers, or comrade Ba'thists: After 46 years of brave struggle, our party is still on the road, clings to principles, its experience is growing and ripening, it is becoming stronger, and the relationship of its beginning with its present, its belief in its people, and its doctrine is becoming stronger in terms of both thought and practice.

It is the party of the Arab people. It emerged from their ranks and expressed their reality and aspirations, and it will continue to defend their cause forever. It is the party of its successive generations, which are enriching Arab life and expressing the spirit of its birth.

Long live our nation, glorious, creative, mujahid, builder, and sacrificer.

Long live the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party—the party of jihad and sacrifice.

Long live steadfast Iraq—the bastion of struggle and the impregnable fortress.

Long live Palestine, Arab and free. Long live Palestine.

We greet Michel 'Aflaq, founder of the Ba'th Party.

Greetings to leader mujahid Saddam Husayn, symbol of principles and pan-Arab strength.

Glory to the righteous martyrs of our nation, the Ba'th Party, al-Qadisiyah, the Mother of Battles, and Palestine. Eternity to our message.

[Signed] The Arab Socialist Ba'th Party National Command, April 1993

'Biggest Irrigation Project' in Mideast Under Way

JN0804093293 Baghdad AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 5 Apr 93 p 6

[By Maryam al-'Attiyah and Latif al-Tayyib]

[Excerpt] Baghdad—Staff General Husayn Kamil Hasan, adviser to the president and chairman of the state higher committee for engineering, has announced that Iraq is implementing the biggest irrigation project in Iraq and the Middle East. This project, he said, aims at irrigating 1.14 million donums in northern, eastern, and southern al-Jazirah that used to rely on rainwater. In a statement to AL-JUMHURIYAH, Husayn Kamil Hasan said that al-Jazirah irrigation project is a strategic irrigation project which aims at breaking the economic blockade imposed on Iraq and achieving agricultural development. [passage omitted]

Minister Says Infant Mortality Tripled Under Sanctions

JN0804080093 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 8-9 Apr 93 p 3

[By JORDAN TIMES staff reporter P.V. Vivekanand]

[Text] Amman—Iraq said Wednesday its national infant mortality rate had tripled and malnutrition was rampant in the country since the imposition of international sanctions against it in 1990, and called for an urgent lifting of the U.N.-imposed measure.

"The Iraqi people are suffering from severe shortages of essential foodstuffs, baby milk, vitamins and drugs, including medicine for children and intensive care supplies and equipment," Iraqi Planning Minister Samal Majid Faraj told an Arab population conference here.

"Mortality rates, particularly among mothers and children, have significantly gone up because of the hardships imposed by the sanctions," the minister said.

Food and medicine are exempt from the sanctions imposed by the U.N. Security Council, but the oil-rich country is banned from exports—its mainstay means for raising revenue to meet the needs of its people.

According to the minister, who headed his country's delegation to the conference that is drafting a major "declaration" on issues related to Arab population, the infant mortality rate in Iraq has gone up to 92.5 per 1,000 live births compared with 29.5 per cent before the Gulf crisis.

Mr. Faraj did not give any figures on the number of deaths directly attributed to the sanctions. International experts and U.N. officials estimate that over 100,000 children under the age of five died in the country from preventable causes since the imposition of the embargo.

"We hope that the hardships that the Iraqi people are undergoing will motivate you to stand by them and call for an immediate lifting of the sanctions," Mr. Faraj told the conference.

He noted that Iraq had a record of self-reliance and development- oriented economic policies since 1968, but the entire infrastructure and programme it developed since then were on the verge of total destruction by the continuing sanctions.

The minister also noted that Iraq had a record of abiding by regional and international decisions and recommendations vis-a-vis population issues and had developed its own strategy for a balanced exploitation of the natural wealth of Iraq, which also has a rich agricultural base.

In separate comments to the Jordan Times, the Iraqi minister said there were no new developments in the stalemate between the U.N. and Iraq over Baghdad's refusal to sell oil worth $1.6 billion under U.N. supervision to raise funds.

"There is no shift in our position," Mr. Faraj said.

The U.N., finding its resources under strain in implementing the terms of the Gulf war ceasefire, proposed in 1991 that Baghdad be allowed a one-time sale of $1.6 billion in oil to raise funds which will be used to pay war reparations and U.N. costs and procure food and medicine for Iraq under U.N. control.

Baghdad says that the U.N. proposal was tantamount to a violation of Iraq's sovereignty and infringed on its market freedom.

Sources at the Amman conference said Iraq was planning to seek a resolution calling for an end to the sanctions, but the move was not expected to be endorsed by the Gulf states attending the meeting.

Regime Said To Burn Villages in Marshland, Move Inhabitants

NC0704153693 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi People in Arabic 1400 GMT 7 Apr 93

[Text] The regime of tyrant Saddam Husayn continues to pursue its policies of repression and murder against the inhabitants of the marshland areas in order to intimidate them and force them to abandon their homes and move to areas selected by the ostracized regime.

According to a recent statement by the opposition, the regime's forces waged attacks on two villages in al-Musharrah area in the marshland of the Maysan Governorate, killing a number of their inhabitants and injuring others. According to the same sources, the forces of the tyrant's regime burned down the houses of the two villages, detained the inhabitants, and took them to unknown destinations.

Defense Minister Confers With Russian Parliamentarians

JN0704201293 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 7 Apr 93

[Text] Fighter Staff General 'Ali Hasan al-Majid, member of the Revolution Command Council and minister of defense, today received a Russian parliamentary delegation led by Vladislav Alekseyevich Achalov, member of the Russian Congress of People's Deputies.

The minister of defense reviewed with the Russian delegation the historic bilateral ties of friendship existing between the two friendly countries and peoples, as well as the common struggle the two peoples are waging against colonialist powers.

The minister of defense affirmed that the unilateral U.S. domination over world affairs has created a disequilibrium in favor of the forces of evil, injustice, and aggression around the world. He urged free nations to continue the struggle to aid the forces of goodness and confront evildoers to safeguard world security and peace.

For his part, Achalov paid tribute to the steadfastness of the Iraqi people and that of their valiant army. He also noted their heroic stand in the face of conspiracies, thanks to the wise leadership of leader President Saddam Husayn.

The meeting was attended by fighter Staff General Iyad Futayyih Khalifah, chief of staff of the Army.

Upcoming Rabin-Mubarak Meeting Considered

TA0804101193 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 8 Apr 93 pp A1, 8

[Report by Gay Bekhor, Yerah Tal, and Yosef Torpstein]

[Excerpts] Egyptian President Husni Mubarak yesterday told Egyptian newspaper editors accompanying him that his planned meeting with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin will be held "in Ismailiyah or in Sinai" before the opening of the talks in Washington. Diplomatic sources in Cairo reported that the meeting will probably be held in Taba or Sharm al-Shaykh, but definitely not in Cairo. [passage omitted]

In reply, a senior official in the Prime Minister's Office said "that since the aim of the meeting is to advance the peace talks with the Palestinians and our other Arab neighbors and not Israeli- Egyptian bilateral relations, Israel will not insist on the two leaders meeting in Jerusalem. The location of the meeting is not important, what is important are the contents and the results."

Another source added that despite the wave of reports that the meeting will be held next Thursday, no official request has so far been received from Egypt to coordinate the meeting and no date has been fixed. Nevertheless, Jerusalem sources estimated that the meeting will be held immediately after the Passover holiday and prior to 20 April, when the peace talks are due to be resumed in Washington.

David Sultan, Israel's ambassador in Cairo, who is in Israel for Passover, reported yesterday to the head of the prime minister's bureau on his contacts with the Cairo government on the meeting. According to sources in Jerusalem, sources in the prime minister's bureau are somewhat embarrassed over Mubarak's unilateral announcement in Washington about the expected meeting because "Rabin has no intention of making further concessions on the deportees or Palestinian issues, therefore a concluding announcement empty of contents might have a negative impact." [passage omitted]

Palestinian sources in Jerusalem said yesterday that during their visit to Washington last month, the Palestinian delegation worked out an agreement in principle with Secretary of State Warren Christopher which if implemented would pave the way to Palestinian participation in the upcoming round of talks in Washington.

According to these sources, the agreement includes the following points:

—Israel will declare that deportations are not a principle of policy and that it will avoid implementing additional deportations as long as the negotiations continue.

—Israel will return the deportees from south Lebanon in stages in accordance with the spirit of Security Council Resolution 799. In the first stage, the 101 deportees whose return Israel has already approved, will be brought back. They will return to their homes before the upcoming round of talks starts.

—Israel will return dozens of Palestinians deported from the territories between 1967 and 1987.

—Israel will take several steps to improve the human rights situation in the territories, including the release of prisoners.

—Israel will show greater openness and flexibility about issues like control over lands during the transitional period.

—The sides will agree to reconsider the Madrid format, including the participation by Palestinians from East Jerusalem and the diaspora in the Palestinian delegation.

—Israel will permit the PLO to send funds to the territories.

—Israeli-Palestinian joint committees to discuss various issues linked to infrastructure in the territories will be set up.

Members of the Palestinian delegation denied there is an agreement.

[Tel Aviv HA'OLAM HAZE in Hebrew on 8 April on page 3 carries a report by 'Anat Sargusti on an interview with Construction and Housing Minister Binyamin Ben-Eli'ezer, who says "we have to strengthen reasonable elements among the Palestinians." Asked whether that means the PLO-Tunis, he replies: "No, I am referring to those here. I would call Faysal al-Husayni, Hanan 'Ashrawi, Ziyad Abu-Zayyad, and Sari Nusaybah, they are the ones I mean—and give them legitimacy in order to start the process." Asked how he would do that, Ben-Eli'ezer replies: "They can head the delegation; they can lead the process."]

Mubarak Seen as Mediator in Palestinian Talks

TA0804063393 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0500 GMT 8 Apr 93

[Report by political correspondent Natan Gutman]

[Text] Political efforts toward the resumption of peace negotiations are now centering on formulas rather than substance, because all sides involved in the negotiations know that nothing much can change in substance. Neither side will change the agreement on the deportees between Rabin and Christopher, nor will Israel agree to implement any more goodwill gestures. For this reason people are now talking about giving new formulations to the old understandings. This duty has been given to Egyptian President Mubarak, the unofficial mediator tasked with bringing back the Palestinians to the negotiations. During his summit with Rabin, which will apparently be held in the Sinai rather than in Cairo, President Mubarak is expected present these formulations, which

are aimed at bringing the Palestinians back to the negotiations without asking Israel to make additional concessions.

Jerusalem sources assess it is possible that the Palestinians will come to Washington a day or two late in order to express their dissatisfaction with the nonresolution of the deportees issue. In this case the talks with the Syrians will begin on schedule and the Palestinians and Jordanians will join later.

Israeli sources yesterday refused to comment on the reports regarding the replacement of Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, head of the Palestinian delegation, by Faysal al-Husayni. Official sources say this proposal was not submitted to Israel and is not on the agenda as far as Israel is concerned. It should be noted that placing al-Husayni at the head of the delegation would violate the Madrid rules. At the same time al-Husayni meets the criteria posed in the past by the Labor party, according to which it is permissible to include in the talks East Jerusalem residents who have another address in the territories.

Apparently the situation will clarify itself only a day or two before the resumption of the talks, following the meetings scheduled between Rabin and Mubarak, Mubarak and 'Arafat, and the meeting of the cordon states foreign ministers.

Demonstration Urges Immediate Peace Talks

TA0304184893 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 3 Apr 93

[Text] Some 1,500 Peace Now activists are currently demonstrating outside the prime minister's residence in Jerusalem calling for the immediate reconvening of the peace process. Knesset Member [MK] Ran Kohen told the demonstrators that the Palestinians must wisen up and cease terror. Our correspondent Naftali Ben-Simon reported a few minutes ago from the scene of the demonstration:

[Begin recording] [Ben-Simon] Peace Now has decided not to abandon the political arena to the right-wing parties. Almost 2,000 people came tonight to the center of Jerusalem calling for the immediate resumption of the peace negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. The demonstrators carried placards saying: The only answer to terrorism is negotiations. Among those present are Labor and Meretz MK's. MK Ran Kohen called on the Palestinians to cease violence forthwith.

[MK No'omi Hazan] We call on the Palestinians, who know full well that our futures are intertwined, to restrain violence, stop violence, and return to the negotiating table because the future and security of all depend on achievements at the negotiating table. [passage omitted]

[Ben-Simon] The police turned up in force fearing unrest and clashes with right-wing groups. The demonstrators marched from the center of Jerusalem to the prime minister's residence holding up lit torches. Nine months have passed and Rabin has still not begun the negotiations, Peace Now leaders said here tonight. [end recording]

Meretz ministers are preparing a plan for the staged separation of Israel and the territories and the gradual cessation of employment by workers from the territories in Israel. Our political correspondent reports that the plan will soon be presented for cabinet consideration. The plan speaks about compensating the workers from the territories on the assumption that it will be cheaper than the economic losses caused by terrorism.

Foreign Ministry Sources Confirm Libyan Request

TA0704132193 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1230 GMT 7 Apr 93

[Text] Official sources at the Foreign Ministry today confirmed the report published in DAVAR that Libyan leader Muhammad al-Qadhdhafi has approached Israel through a third party with a request to allow 200 Libyan citizens to visit the Muslim holy sites in Israel.

The sources stressed to our political correspondent Natan Gutman that Israel has still not responded to the Libyan appeal, mainly due to U.S. reservations about granting the request.

Rabin Congratulates New French Prime Minister

TA0104183693 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1700 GMT 1 Apr 93

[Text] New French Prime Minister Balladur says he will act to improve ties with Israel and to enhance the understanding between the two governments. Our correspondent Gid'on Kouts reports that he made these remarks in a talk with Yehuda Lankry, Israel's ambassador to France.

Prime Minister Rabin has sent Balladur a wire congratulating him and expressing his confidence that with Mr. Balladur's encouragement, the ties between the two countries will grow closer. Mr. Rabin hoped to meet with the French prime minister soon.

Israel To Send Military Attache to Moscow

TA0204153893 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1600 GMT 2 Apr 93

[Text] Israel has decided to send a military attache to Moscow with the rank of brigadier general and the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] has already decided who it will be, Ambassador Hayim Bar- Lev told a delegation of Israeli journalists touring the CIS at the initiative of the Jewish Agency.

Ambassador Bar-Lev refused to say who the officer is. He stressed that Israeli-Russian relations are stable and do not depend on developments in the CIS. He said

government authorities and the Russian Parliament have a very positive attitude toward Israel. Half of the Russian government has already visited Israel and the general opinion there is that Israel is omnipotent in internal matters and in its ties with the United States and diaspora Jewry.

The Israeli journalists also conferred with Sergey Gregoryansk, editor of GLASNOST in Moscow, a human rights fighter under the previous communist regime. Gregoryansk told them that officials of Russian's new security services continue to pursue Jewish organizations, and support the anti-Semitic organization Pamyat and anti-Semitic newspapers. He said that even though those officials are no longer given instructions to act against Jewish organizations, they do so out of personal keenness.

Arab States Have Reached 'Strategic Parity'

TA0804101793 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 8 Apr 93 pp A1, 8

[Report by defense affairs correspondent Aluf Ben]

[Text] Reserve Major General Yisra'el Tal, the defense minister's adviser, believes that the Arab states "have reached the strategic parity they sought—strategic deterrence—through surface-to-surface missiles."

In Tal's view, Israel in the past monopolized strategic deterrence through its air dominance, but "we have lost this monopoly and there is a danger that it will go to the Arabs," by which he means the distant Arab states which do not border on Israel.

Tal's remarks appear in a new book by reserve Brigadier General Arye Shalev, "Peace and Security on the Golan Heights," which deals with future peace and security arrangements between Israel and Syria. Tal gave the interview in March 1992, and in it he analyzes anticipated changes in future wars taking into account the missiles which now feature in the arena.

In Tal's view, Syria cannot open a strategic missile offensive on its own because it would pay a very heavy price, but it will be able to do so together with other Arab states because the danger it will be facing from the Israel Air Force will be reduced, "if the Arabs have precision-guided and smart missiles, which can hit airfields in Israel and disrupt its air power."

Precise-guided surface-to-surface missiles could reach pinpointed targets in Israel such as airports, emergency warehouses, command and control centers, supply bases, and power stations, and disrupt the call-up of the Army reserves.

According to Tal, the day the Arab states can neutralize the Israel Air Force with precision-guided weapons "they will be able to decide the rules of the game of war, in other words, to start a total war." A missile attack could even precede the plans for an onslaught.

Further Reportage on Palestinian Labor Issues

Rabin: 'Dependency' Must End

TA0704173793 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1700 GMT 7 Apr 93

[Text] Prime Minister Rabin says Israel now has a unique opportunity to end its dependency on Palestinian workers from the territories. Rabin was speaking this evening in Jerusalem to a gathering of the Mevasseret Ziyyon education center. David Essing reports:

[Begin recording] [Essing] Prime Minister Rabin declared that the time had come for the country to end its dependency on Palestinian workers in construction and farming. In a strongly worded statement, Rabin demanded that the tens of thousands of unemployed Israelis fill the jobs of the Palestinians who are now refused entry into Israel.

[Rabin] One-hundred and fifty thousand unemployed; 70,000 Palestinians out of 120,000 work in the Israeli construction business. Why should we not exploit this unique opportunity to bring about a change?

[Essing] Rabin added that Israelis must now turn to jobs in construction and farming to replace the Palestinians from the territories.

[Rabin] Today Israelis can do it. We should not be dependent on the Palestinians from the territories. Let them stay there. [end recording]

Palestinians in 'Vital' Jobs

TA0704192493 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 7 Apr 93

[Text] The defense establishment will tomorrow permit 3,000 laborers from the territories to come and work in vital economic sectors. Today only 1,576 workers arrived in Israel, even though permits were issued to 2,500.

A meeting between Labor and Social Welfare Minister Ora Namir and Major General Dani Rothschild, the coordinator of government activities in the territories, ended one hour ago. In the meeting, the two officials decided on new regulations for the employment of workers from the territories.

Minister on Steps To Control Workers

TA0804071693 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0400 GMT 8 Apr 93

[Text] Labor and Social Welfare Minister Ora Namir has decided on several steps for tightening control over the employment of Palestinians from the territories. She announced these steps following a meeting last night with Civil Administration officials, Police and Employment Office representatives, and with members of the Labor and Social Welfare Ministry.

Starting today, the Employment Office will send requests for workers from the territories directly to the Civil Administration, which will review each worker independently. Palestinians who are approved for work will be given a two-month permit. At the end of their period, their eligibility will be reviewed anew by the Civil Administration. Namir is also looking into other steps, including having Israeli employers hand over a 500-shekel deposit, which will not be returned if the employer's workers are found spending the night within the Green Line.

Despite the continued closure today, 3,000 daily work permits have been handed out to Palestinians from the territories.

Further on Territories Closure, Security Issues

Closure Cannot Stop Attacks

TA0704174093 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1700 GMT 7 Apr 93

[Text] Deputy Defense Minister Mordekhay Gur says sealing the territories cannot completely prevent terrorist attacks on Israelis.

Speaking to reporters while touring border settlements this afternoon, Gur said the closure would be lifted only after certain goals are achieved. He said Prime Minister and Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin would decide when to lift the closure.

Prime Minister on Security

TA0804084793 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0830 GMT 8 Apr 93

[Text] The closure imposed on the territories will not be lifted after the Passover holiday. This was said a short time ago by Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin in an appearance before the Knesset Labor faction. Rabin did not say when the closure will be lifted. Prime Minister Rabin also denied the reports published this morning that he will meet with President Mubarak in the Sinai next week. He noted that neither the place nor the date of the meeting with Mubarak have been determined yet.

[Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew is currently carrying live coverage of the special Knesset session on eight motions for the security agenda.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el and Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 0800 GMT on 8 April announce that they will carry live coverage of Rabin's reply to the motions, expected at "approximately 1000 GMT."]

Man Sentenced for Violating Closure

TA0404110793 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 4 Apr 93 p A3

[ITIM report]

[Excerpt] Sa'id Mahmud 'Arakan, a 22-year-old inhabitant of Rafah who left the Gaza Strip during the closure and was arrested near Beersheba, was sentenced on Friday to 10 months imprisonment, of which he will serve 45 days in jail. This is the first time that a violator of the closure has been actually sentenced to prison. [passage omitted]

Bethlehem Resident Appeals Closure

TA0804102193 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0900 GMT 8 Apr 93

[Text] A first appeal to the High Court of Justice against the closure on the territories was submitted today. George Anastas of Bethlehem this morning submitted an appeal in which he claims that the closure is preventing him from managing his business in Israel and his causing him financial damage. Our legal affairs correspondent Mira Amsalem reports that Anastas is the owner of a fashion house in East Jerusalem. He claims that the commander of the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] Central Command, who is in charge of Judaea and Samaria, is discriminating between the residents of the territories by giving entrance permits only to the residents who are vital for Israel's economy.

Netanyahu Criticizes Government Security Record

TA0804111793 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1000 GMT 8 Apr 93

[Excerpts] The Knesset is now debating eight motions of no confidence [as heard] and motions of support in the government over the deterioration of internal security. Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin is now responding to the motions. Tzvi Pantanowitz reports from the Knesset:

[Begin recording] [Pantanowitz] Good afternoon, I have just left the plenum where the prime minister is addressing the house in answer to several motions for the agenda, and motions moved by his own coalition partners in support of government policy. The Passover holiday atmosphere was not strong enough to override the differences on security and politics in the Knesset this morning. Five opposition no-confidence motions, three coalition motions of support for government policy, a volatile situation outside, MK's [Knesset members] railing to go inside, and there you have an explosive mix.

Leading off for the opposition was Binyamin Netanyahu in his maiden parliamentary speech as head of the Likud opposition. He wasted no time in setting out what he said was an emergency situation, which required immediate legislative measures to be adopted after the Passover recess. He mentioned four points: one, the right to deport terrorists and their supporters; two, destruction of homes; three, the death penalty for particularly cruel terrorist murders; four, the easing of the measures needed to grant gun licenses for soldiers who were in combat units. He vigorously attacked what he called the government's policy of separating Israel from the territories. How long will you keep them sealed off, he said,

for weeks, two years, 10 years? The separation of the two peoples can only lead to the creation of two states, and you are not telling the nation the truth about this. The greater the separation the more there will be terror, Netanyahu said. They, the terrorists, he thundered, understand this, and they are holding a knife to the nation's throat. Later, Netanyahu spoke to reporters:

[Netanyahu] This will make the danger of knifes seem pale by comparison. We will have here a mortal threat to the state of Israel. If that is their solution to the problem of the knifings let them come out and say so. They say it is not, and in fact they are beginning to open up the closure of the territories. So we have suggested concrete ways to deal with those who foment terror and perpetrate it. And it will be a very interesting test on the government's real intention, what they will do about these suggestions after the Passover holiday. I think there are better ways to effect a separation than drawing a physical line, which is a political line and a strategic line. I don't think the solution to the problem of Arab workers from the West Bank inside Israel from Judaea, Samaria and Gaza is to draw a line and put them in a Palestinian state behind the fence. I think a better way is to create economic means of separation, and I suggested the mobility of labor.

[Pantanowitz] Netanyahu made it clear that he was not against bringing in foreign labor. In the plenum Netanyahu said the government had to go. [passage omitted]

Jewish Woman, 2 Arabs Injured

TA0704192193 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 7 Apr 93

[Excerpt] A Jewish woman and two Arab youths were injured today in the course of incidents in the territories. The woman was injured by glass shards from her windshield after her car was pelted with stones north of Hebron. She received medical treatment at the scene and was sent home.

An 18-year-old Arab from the village of eastern Barta'ah, near Janin, was wounded by IDF [Israel Defense Forces] gunfire after he ignored soldiers' orders to halt. Another 20-year-old youth was hurt in a similar incident in the Ramallah area. Nasir Salamah, a 33-year-old resident of Tulkarm, was murdered this morning. An unidentified Arab shot him in the center of the town this morning on suspicion of collaborating with Israel. [passage omitted]

Prisoner Reportedly Died of Natural Causes

TA0804085993 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0800 GMT 8 Apr 93

[Text] The security prisoner 'Amid Sa'id Hasan died in Ashqelon's Barzilay Hospital of a chronic lung illness rather than of violence and torture. This was stated by a pathologist appointed by the detainee's family and a health authorities' pathologist. Sa'id Hasan was considered to be one of the Fatah Hawks' leaders in Gaza. He was detained approximately two weeks ago and interrogated in a Shin Bet installation in the Ashqelon prison. Subsequently, he was hospitalized in Barzilay Hospital, where he died. His family claimed he was beaten during the interrogation and that some of his ribs were broken. They therefore demanded to include a foreign pathologist in the autopsy. Our correspondent Moshe Nussbaum reports that it is still being investigated whether a gas grenade thrown at the terrorist hastened his death.

Red Eagle Member Murder Suspect Captured

TA0304191793 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1900 GMT 3 Apr 93

[Text] An IDF [Israel Defense Forces] unit captured a member of the Red Eagle gang in Rafah wanted on suspicion of murdering Jews in the Gaza Strip. Our correspondent Nisim Qeynan reports that a revolver and two magazines were found on the man. The IDF captured him during a patrol in Rafah's farming areas. The man's cousin, who was assisting him in firing practice, was also caught on the site.

A firebomb was hurled this evening at the main gate to the Cave of the Patriarchs in Hebron, but there were neither casualties nor damage.

Air Force Officers Removed Following Accident

TA0804080093 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0400 GMT 8 Apr 93

[Text] Israeli Air Force commander, Major General Herzl Budinger has removed three Air Force officers from their posts following an investigation into an accident at an air display last week. Two Air Force mechanics were wounded in that incident. The air display was put on for parents who were visiting the base. The investigation concluded that the accident was not due to a technical failure, as at first believed, but sprung from a series of errors, beginning with the unauthorized permission to hold the display, given by the Air Force brigadier general commanding the base. He, an Air Force major, and a squadron leader were removed from their posts. In addition the squadron commander, a lieutenant colonel, and the pilot leading the Phantom formation, a major, shared blame for the string of mistakes which led to the accident.

Poll: Government 'Not in Control'

TA0604094193 Tel Aviv HA'OLAM HAZE in Hebrew 31 Mar 93 p 3

[Report by Eliyahu Hasin on an "exclusive" public opinion poll by the Shelah Institute]

[Excerpts] This time, more than ever before, it is very important to stress the circumstances and background in which this exclusive HA'OLAM HAZE public opinion poll was conducted. It was carried out on 23 and 24 March, some three weeks after the wave of Arab terror

acts broke out. They, as well as the following demonstrations and riots on the Jewish street, overshadowed the public awareness of and feeling for other events that took place during that time in Israel and the world. [passage omitted]

The first question deals with the stand—recently more frequently expressed—that Arab assailants should be killed at the scene, without going into the troublesome process of detentions and trials. The questioner presented it thus: "Do you support or oppose the stand that when an Arab assailant is captured in the act, he should be killed on the spot, and not handed over to the police?"

The poll found that 63 percent favor the killing, 32 percent oppose it, and five percent had no stand or reply. [passage omitted]

The second question wished to reexamine the public appreciation for the government's treatment of "domestic security problems in Israel" during the heated days, when the issue turned into the spearhead of the right-wing opposition criticism of the government.

The public judgment was found to be very harsh, estimating the government performance as: very good—two percent; good—18 percent; not good—34 percent; very bad—42 percent. Put together, the results read: negative opinion—76 percent; positive—20 percent; no opinion—4 percent. [passage omitted]

The third question wished to clearly quantify the prevailing feeling that, following the wave of domestic terror and perhaps not just because of it, there is a feeling that the government has lost its authority and control, and that there is the beginning of a shift toward a situation of near-anarchy. The question presented was direct and simple:

"To what extent do you believe the government is in control of events in Israel?" The interviewees were given four options to choose from, and following is the distribution of the answers:

The government is in control of the situation—3 percent; it is generally in control—24 percent; not very much in control—41 percent; definitely not in control—29 percent. Jointly, the data reads: The government is in control to a certain degree—27 percent; not in control—70 percent; 3 percent avoided a reply. [passage omitted]

The fourth question was called for by the previous questions: "Compared with the current government, do you believe a right-wing- religious government headed by the Likud, without Labor, would have handled the state problems better, the same way, or worse?"

Following are the replies: much better—13 percent; better—22 percent; worse—16 percent; much worse—11 percent; the same—28 percent. Put together, the figures show 35 percent favor a Likud-led government, 27 percent prefer the current government, 28 percent had no preference, and 10 percent had no opinion. [passage omitted]

The poll was conducted by telephone by the Shelah Research Institute, headed by Arye Shelah. The institute polled 533 interviewees, who constitute a representative sample of the adult Jewish Israeli population, with the exclusion of kibbutzim. The margin of error of this poll is 4.2 percent either way.

U.S. Moves on Negotiations 'Suspicious'

JN0804092293 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 8 Apr 93 pp 1, 25

[Editorial: "U.S. Promises, Erosion of Credibility"]

[Text] The U.S. secretary of state has called on the Palestinian delegation to return to negotiations, and hinted that the Israelis are willing to make some concessions if the Palestinians return to these negotiations. Such a call gives rise to very deep suspicions about the premeditated intentions behind the attempt to drag the Arab delegations to the negotiating table under the current Israeli intransigence and arrogance. This is especially the case since Rabin's government continues to state that it will make no concessions to encourage the Arabs to return to the negotiations.

If we move from intentions to the current Israeli practical measures on the ground, we see that all actions by the Israeli occupation authorities confirm Israel's desire to prevent this or that Arab party from joining the imminent round of talks. They also confirm that Israel is pushing the Palestinians in particular to turn down the U.S.-Russian invitation in an attempt to isolate them from the Arab position and inflict the greatest damage on their negotiating position, which, until now, has been drawing some strength and effectiveness from the unity of the Arab negotiating position.

The continuation of the state of siege and isolation of the occupied territories—as well as the assassinations, demolition of houses, arrests, and harassing and disrupting the daily life of hundreds of thousands of citizens under siege—will only lead to one result only; namely, the Palestinian delegation's decision to travel from the occupied territories to Washington will become an impossible task in view of the growing Palestinian public's despair and frustration with these negotiations, which have been marking time since they started in late 1991.

In the light of all this, we have legitimate suspicions about Warren Christopher's hints at possible Israeli concessions to the Palestinians if they join the negotiations at the set date. Furthermore, we do not feel we can trust these vague promises, which could have encouraged the Palestinians not to miss this opportunity. This is especially the case since all Israeli preparations on the ground, and all Israeli statements made in various forums, deprive the promises of the U.S. secretary of state, who is very supportive of the current Israeli position, of one necessary condition: that those who make promises must be trustworthy. The Israeli actions and statements also prevent these promises from regaining the credibility they once enjoyed but which are now eroding.

Arab Countries To Provide Medical Aid to Iraq

JN0704100793 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 7 Apr 93 p 24

[By Mamduh Hawamidah]

[Text] The Arab countries have unanimously decided to extend urgent medical assistance to sisterly Iraq to support its medical services and help it overcome the scarcity of medicines and medical supplies it is suffering as a result of the siege imposed on it.

In a statement to AL-RA'Y, Iraqi Health Minister Dr. Umid Midhat Mubarak, who is also labor minister, and is representing his country in the Arab labor conference, said the decision was adopted by the Arab health ministers and their Executive Bureau at the end of their meetings at the Arab League's headquarters. Dr. Mubarak expressed pleasure over this decision.

The Iraqi health minister said the Arab health ministers have asked the Executive Bureau of the Arab Health Ministers Council to promptly decide the extent of support and assistance in the form of medicines and medical requirements.

He added that the Arab health ministers decided to urge all world countries to allow the evacuation of the sick from Iraq by ambulance aircraft for treatment abroad.

He said that the Arab ministers also adopted a decision to call on all world countries to enable Iraq to obtain medicines and medical requirements and equipment.

Air Force Chief of Staff Retired

JN0404182393 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 4 Apr 93

[Text] The Council of Ministers has decided to retire Staff Lieutenant General Ihsan Hamid Shurdum, Air Force chief of staff, at his request as of tomorrow, Monday 5 April 1993.

A royal decree was issued appointing him as adviser to his majesty the king as of tomorrow, Monday 5 April 1993.

Public Security Director Retired

JN0304183693 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 3 Apr 93

[Text] A royal decree has been issued promoting Public Security Director Staff Major General Fadil 'Ali Fuhayd to the rank of Lieutenant General as of today, 3 April 1993. The Council of Ministers also decided to retire Public Security Director Staff Lieutenant General Fadil 'Ali Fuhayd as of 4 April 1993 at his request.

His Majesty King Husayn conferred the Jordanian al-Kawkab Medal of the First Order upon Lt. Gen. Fadil 'Ali Fuhayd.

A royal decree was also issued appointing Major General 'Abd-al- Rahman al-'Adwan to director of Public Security as of tomorrow, Sunday, 1993.

Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Retired

JN0404181093 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 4 Apr 93

[Excerpt] A royal decree has been issued appointing Staff Lieutenant General 'Abd-al-Hafiz Mar'i al-Ka'abinah to the post of chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the Jordanian Armed Forces as of tomorrow, 5 April 1993.

The Council of Ministers had earlier decided to retire Staff Field Marshal Fathi Abu-Talib, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, as of tomorrow, 5 April 1993, at his request. [passage omitted]

Deportee Spokesman Criticizes Christopher Remarks

NC0704122593 Shanayh Voice of the Mountain in Arabic 1130 GMT 7 Apr 93

[Text] Dr. 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Rantisi, spokesman for the deportees, today deplored the statements by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher concerning the return of the Palestinians to the talks. He reiterated that the deportees are opposed to the resumption of the talks before their problem is resolved and UN Security Council Resolution 799 is implemented in full. Dr. al-Rantisi said that the talks held by Egyptian President Husni Mubarak in Washington did not change this position.

Hizballah Radio Refutes U.S. 'Full Partner' Role

NC0804080293 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0550 GMT 8 Apr 93

[Political commentary]

[Excerpts] During the joint news conference held by U.S. President Bill Clinton and Husni Mubarak, head of the Camp David regime, Clinton reminded the Arabs that his administration will be prepared to act as a full partner when they return to the negotiating table. The promised U.S. role can be understood by comparing what Mubarak, head of the Egyptian regime, said before and after meeting Clinton. Before the meeting, he said he was seeking, and will seek, to convince the U.S. President of the need to pressure Israel to expedite the return of the 400 Palestinians extracted from their soil and to facilitate the convening of the ninth round of peace talks. Emerging from his meeting with Clinton, Mubarak said he was convinced that what Washington has done, as part of the known deal with [Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq] Rabin's government, is the maximum it can do in this regard. In other words, Mubarak is now convinced that the responsibility for obstructing settlement building falls on the Arab side and is not the result of Zionist aggression. [passage omitted]

Recent statements by U.S. officials and Mubarak's adoption of the U.S. viewpoint have prevented any misreading of the full partner concept proposed by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher during his recent tour of the region, and which Clinton emphasized. If some believed that the full partner notion meant U.S. pressure on the Zionist entity to compel it to withdraw from the territories occupied in 1967, Clinton's remarks have dissipated any such belief and underscored the U.S. full protection of that entity's security, as the Zionists understand it. This is particularly true since Clinton has said more than once that the special relations between the United States and Israel provide a shining example for the world because they, meaning the Zionists, are at the forefront of those struggling for democracy.

In any case, the fate of Resolutions 242 and 338 under the U.S. partnership will not fare any better than that of Resolution 799 [on the Palestinian deportees]. It is wrong for the Arabs to imagine, or to say, that the Zionist entity is no longer a strategic ally of the United States in view of the changes on the world scene. Israel is one of the main pillars of the U.S. tyrannical system. It is an immense lie to say that the U.S. Administration is acting as an arbiter in the bilateral relations, because it is the cause of the problem and the source of all corruption.

Israeli Troops Set Up New Positions in South

NC0804063093 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0445 GMT 8 Apr 93

[Text] The NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY has reported that Israeli troops have set up new positions in Marj 'Uyun, al-Khiyam, and al-Majidiyah and reinforced their positions in (Tallat al-'Abbad), Hula, Markaba, Yarin, Shama', and Marwahin. The news agency added that Israeli troops had set up a military post in al-Naqurah Port and that units from the Israeli Golani Brigade had performed military exercizes with live ammunition in al-Qantarah village.

'More Violent' Israeli Aggression Warned

NC0804063293 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0530 GMT 8 Apr 93

[Text] The Army Command in the south has passed a circular to some official institutions adjacent to the Israeli positions in the occupied Lebanese areas. The circular urges them to take precautions against more violent and extensive Israeli aggression, which is expected to occur soon because the date for resuming the Arab-Israeli talks in Washington is nearing. The command called for caution, particularly since Israeli troops used shells stuffed with more than 800 nails in their bombardment of Haris last night. This type of shell is used against individuals.

Iran Said Funding 6 Radio Stations in South

TA0704135993 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 7 Apr 93 p A1

[Report by Arab affairs correspondent Gay Bekhor]

[Text] Within the framework of its campaign to export the Islamic revolution around the world and with the intention of aiding the organizations under its patronage—Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and Hizballah—Iran recently began to fund six radio stations which broadcast on FM to Lebanon and the territories.

The stations, which are located in south Lebanon, began regular broadcasting over the past two months.

It is still unclear whether the stations were set up within the framework of Iran's agreement with Hamas to set up a central radio and television station in south Lebanon aimed at bolstering Hamas in the territories at the expense of the PLO or whether they are part of a local initiative that has received Iran's backing.

The six stations are Radio Green Lebanon (green is the color of Islam); the Voice of Peace, which broadcasts religious songs and news; Radio Koran, which broadcasts from Tyre mostly religious programs and anti-Israeli sermons; the Voice of Islam; Radio of the Call to the Faith, which broadcasts only prayers; and the Voice of al-Isra' (Muhammad's legendary journey from Mecca to Jerusalem), which belongs to Hamas and broadcasts intifadah songs, prayers, and incitement against the Jewish state.

It appears that the establishment of the six stations in south Lebanon is Iran's first step in setting up electronic media in the Arab world to disseminate the fundamentalist creed. A radio station is due to be set up in the very near future in Port Sudan, which will be operated by fundamentalist elements in Sudan headed by activists in the Islamic Nationalist Front. This station, to be called the Voice of the Islamic Revolution, will broadcast ideological programs as well as coded messages to the commands of religious groups in the Arab states.

The station, whose broadcasts will be picked up throughout the Middle East and especially in Egypt and North Africa, will be supervised and fully funded by Iran. In the first stage, it will broadcast six hours daily. Egypt and other Arab states are preparing to block and disrupt the broadcasts.

Iran is also planning to set up a Muslim news agency, which will concentrate on fundamentalist activities throughout the Middle East and naturally report on them in a positive light, in addition to the official Iranian news agency.

Iranian President Hashemi-Rafsanjani last December called for the establishment of the news agency "in order to stand up to the West's arrogant communications media, which distort the facts in favor of their vested interests and carry out cultural occupation."

Armenian Delegation Departs After Talks With Officials

NC0704200393 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1615 GMT 7 Apr 93

[Text] A high-level Armenian delegation, including the foreign minister and the assistant president [as heard], visited Lebanon via al-Masna' [Lebanese border point with Syria] today.

The delegation discussed ways to promote economic ties between Lebanon and Armenia and the possibility of opening an Armenian embassy in Lebanon with Minister of Economy and Trade Hagop Demerdjian and Minister of State Shahe Barsoumian. After the talks, which were held in Shtawra, the delegation left for Damascus to meet with Syrian officials.

Al-Hirawi Denies Plans for Government Reshuffle

NC0604202093 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1915 GMT 6 Apr 93

[Text] President Ilyas al-Hirawi today declared that the political and security situation in the country is stable. In an interview with the Saudi newspaper 'UKAZ, he denied plans for a government reshuffle.

President al-Hirawi also said that Saudi King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz promised to revive the effort to establish an international fund for the reconstruction of Lebanon.

Army Confiscates Weapons in East Beirut

NC0704125693 Shanayh Voice of the Mountain in Arabic 1130 GMT 7 Apr 93

[Text] The Army Command Guidance Department says an Army unit this morning searched a warehouse in al-Karantina [east Beirut] and confiscated weapons and ammunition, including RPG launchers, medium-caliber machine guns, antipersonnel mines, hand grenades, communications equipment, and field binoculars.

Prime Minister Receives Armenian Minister

JN0704125493 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1115 GMT 7 Apr 93

[Text] Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi received Armenian Foreign Minister Vahan Papazyan and the accompanying delegation at 1330 today. The meeting was attended by Dr. Ghassan Raslan, head of the Foreign Ministry's East Europe Department, and the Armenian charge d'affaires in Damascus.

Discussion during the meeting dealt with present bilateral relations and means to develop them in various fields.

Al-Ahmar Addresses Ba'th Party Anniversary Meeting

JN0704193193 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in 1504 GMT 7 Apr 93

[Speech by 'Abdallah al-Ahmar, assistant secretary general of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, made on behalf of President Hafiz al-Asad to mark the 46th anniversary of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, in Damascus—live]

[Excerpts] Comrades, dear brothers, Ba'thist militants everywhere, our Arab masses: In spring, life regenerates itself; and the annual anniversary of the founding of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party falls in April—symbolizing the spring of the Arab nation and self-renewing offerings; it is a fond occasion when people exchange congratulations and energies are recharged to pursue the victorious march of the party. [passage omitted]

Comrades, brothers: Our stand on the peace process is clear and has been known from the very beginning. However, Israel's behavior has been, and still is, based on the pursuit of aggression and occupation, as well as on placing impediments and obstacles in the face of all peace initiatives. Israel was forced to enter the negotiations, and it met the Arab will to make peace with intransigence, arrogance, and attempts to undo all the peace initiatives by fabricating problems that have stood in the path of any progress in the negotiations and sought to wreck the very foundations of the peace process. Israel's arbitrary anti-human rights practices in the occupied territories have not stopped. If anything, these practices have, over the past few months, been reinforced and grown sharper and more violent. These include the mass deportation of Palestinian Arabs; closures of entire areas; home demolitions; the killing of children, elderly, and women; and turning the entire occupied territory into a big prison by closing off the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Israel still insists on noncompliance with pertinent international resolutions—especially Resolutions 242, 338, 425, and 799—the implementation of which would render the peace process a success. Israel's mounting defiance of international legitimacy and its resolutions, as well its arbitrary and aggressive measures have created grave dangers that have put the entire peace process at risk and led it into a cul-de-sac. This situation requires that the position of the conference's cosponsors, particularly the United States, be firmer in a way that conforms with the U.S. commitments to the bases of the peace process. Here, we point out that the U.S. role of a full partner in the negotiations is a wanted and desired role. However, the objective of this role can only be achieved by playing the role of an honest broker. The role of an honest broker is absolutely inconsistent with favoring and encouraging the aggressor, not to mention the commitments made to Israel by the United States revealing its bias, which, in turn, further upsets the present equation in the conflict and serves to encourage Israel not to comply with international legitimacy.

While reiterating that they cling to a just and comprehensive peace, and that they have a certain desire to achieve it, Syria and the Arabs standing with it remind the world of the principles and bases of peace on which the peace process was founded. Peace should be just and comprehensive, based on a full and total withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories and on the recognition of the Palestinian Arab people's legitimate rights. The road to all this lies in implementing all the provisions and points of the legitimate international resolutions. Removing the obstacles Israel has placed in the path of the peace negotiations, foremost among them being the need to solve the Palestinian deportee issue by applying Resolution 799, and Israeli's commitment to implementing the international resolutions and the bases of the peace process, will lead to the success of this process and the establishment of a just and comprehensive peace in the region—a peace which is in the interest of all parties.

The Arabs, who expressed commitment to these resolutions to reach a comprehensive peace, stress that peace cannot be achieved at the expense of their rights and territories, which cannot be subject to bargaining or relinquishment. Instead, all these rights should return to their owners. Complete peace depends on total withdrawal from the occupied land.

Syria, which bases its policies and positions on firm principles, stresses the need for a comprehensive solution. It is, as struggler President Hafiz al-Asad [applause] said: Syria has gone to war many times unilaterally, but has never acted unilaterally in the peace process. Syria has always affirmed that peace should be comprehensive. While hoping that the peace negotiations will resume soon, we affirm that the removal of obstacles, particularly with regard to the deportee issue, will contribute to the creation of an appropriate atmosphere for resuming negotiations. Israel should abide by Security Council Resolution 799 pertaining to the deportee issue to remove obstacles to the peace process.

O comrades, o brothers: The policy of using double standards and supporting and awarding the aggressor is essentially a policy of encouraging the aggressor to continue and reinforce its aggression. This policy will encourage the aggressor to place more obstacles in the

path of peace, step up its intransigence and indifference to the will of the international community, and reject the principles and bases of peace.

It is high time for the West to prove, by deeds and not by words, that it has ultimately disposed of its racist thought hostile to Arabs and Muslims, and to show that it is actually interested in peace based on justice, equality, and real democracy in international relations.

O comrades: The pan-Arab and human implication of our thought and policies is the basis of the Ba'th doctrine. Great Arab leader Hafiz al-Asad [applause] has been warning the Arabs and working hard to reinforce Arab solidarity, which is the Arabs' biggest weapon to defend their cause, regain their rights, and promote their integration for development and progress in a world dominated by the logic of blocks and alliances. [passage omitted]

Afghanistan

No Intention Seen of Interfering in Tajikistan

LD0604163893 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 6 Apr 93

[Statement of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, issued on 6 April]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate: Observing the principles of good-neighborliness in the international community and peaceful common life, and following its principles of foreign policy in line with internationally accepted norms, the Islamic State of Afghanistan [ISA] never intends to interfere in the internal affairs of any country. It hopes, in particular, that the problems faced by the fraternal people of Tajikistan will be solved by themselves so that they can live in peace and security and mutual oppression in that country will be eliminated.

Despite these good aspirations on the part of the ISA, letters sent to the ISA Consulate in Dushanbe and news circulated by the Foreign Affairs Ministry of the friendly Republic of Tajikistan have alleged that the borders of that country have been violated by ISA forces.

Despite the fact that the presence of foreign forces within the borders of our friendly neighbor, Tajikistan, is mainly considered a threat against our country, for the sake of still further improvement of relations between the two countries, the ISA has not forwarded an official protest, and this is not far from the sight of this state [as heard].

The ISA is once again considering such protests and complaints; it views the present problems in Tajikistan as purely the internal affairs of that country, and does not hold back from any sort of cooperation with it.

Sadiqi: No Consultation by Hekmatyar on Cabinet

LD0604173793 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 6 Apr 93

[Text] Mawlawi 'Abdol Satar Sadiqi, deputy head of Harakat-e Enqelab-e Eslami Afghanistan [Islamic Revolutionary Movement of Afghanistan], made the following statement to a BAKHTAR correspondent regarding a radio message from Esteemed Mawlawi Mohammad Nabi Mohammadi on the list of the cabinet proposed to the leader of Islamic State of Afghanistan by Esteemed Golboddin Hekmatyar: Esteemed Hekmatyar has not consulted me on the formation of the new cabinet and the selection of ministers. It is not acceptable to me. If we and other leaders of the organization are consulted in the future, it will be acceptable to us and we will take part in the cabinet.

Rabbani Meets ICO Official in Kabul

LD0704205693 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1750 GMT 7 Apr 93

[Text] Esteemed Professor Borhanoddin Rabbani, Afghan president, this afternoon met with Mohammad Ibrahim Badr, assistant secretary general of the Islamic Conference Organization [ICO] and special envoy of the ICO secretary general, and accompanying delegation. Rabbani held a function in honor of the delegation, which arrived in Kabul today, at the headquarters of the presidency.

Bangladesh

Joint Committee for Cooperation With Japan Meets

BK0504164693 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 1530 GMT 5 Apr 93

[Text] The sixth meeting of Bangladesh-Japan Joint Committee for Commercial and Economic Cooperation was held in Dhaka today.

Inaugurating the meeting, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia expressed the hope that it will help augment Bangladesh's exports to Japan and attract Japanese investment in the country. She said exchange of ideas and experience between the business communities of the two countries will act as a catalytic agent in expanding trade, commerce, and investment. She also called for frequent exchange of trade delegations between the two countries.

The prime minister said development is an integrated process requiring close cooperation among nations. In particular, mutual cooperation and close trade links among Asian nations are of paramount importance.

She said resource constraints stand as a singular important impediment to the accumulated problems of widespread poverty and unemployment. She (?sought) basic international cooperation in resolving these problems along with our own [word indistinct]. Begum Zia said poverty alleviation and improved employment opportunities are top on her government's agenda. This target cannot be achieved without basic and labor-intensive industrialization. She said Japan and Bangladesh can forge lasting cooperative relations for mutual benefit.

Leader of the 39-member Japanese delegation to the meeting, (Sekuto Ikebada), said the agenda for the joint meeting includes not only economy and trade of the two countries, but also investment and technical cooperation. The issue of technical cooperation will also deal with fostering of human resources.

He said after the joint meeting, members of his delegation are to visit Chittagong Export Processing Zone and a new zone in the suburbs of Dhaka. He hoped that this visit will help the Japanese entrepreneurs deepen their understandings about doing business in Bangladesh.

Two messages, one from the Japanese prime minister, Kiichi Miyazawa, and the other from the Japanese minister for international trade and industry, Yoshiro Mori, were read out at the inaugural function.

Our representative says that Bangladesh-Japan Joint Committee for Commercial and Economic Cooperation comprises nominees of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry [FBCCI] and the Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry. It aims at fostering friendship between the business circles of Bangladesh and Japan and promoting trade, investment, and tourism. The inaugural function was addressed by Commerce Minister M.K. Anwar, Industries Minister Shamsul Islam Khan, Finance Minister Saifur Rahman, outgoing Japanese Ambassador Toshio Saiki, and FBCCI president and leader of the Bangladesh delegation to the joint meeting, Mahbubur Rahman. The fifth meeting of the joint committee was held in Tokyo in November 1990.

Government To Boost Exports to CIS States

BK0804093893 Dhaka DAINIK ITTEFAQ in Bengali 3 Apr 93 p 1

[By Giasuddin Ahmed]

[Text] Bangladesh has decided to set up a "line of credit" to create markets for its products in the CIS countries. For this purpose, the Bangladesh Government will extend loans amounting to 200 million taka (about $5 million) to these countries. This decision was made at a cabinet committee meeting on financial and economic affairs held recently with the finance minister, Saifur Rahman, in the chair. It aims at enabling the CIS states to purchase goods from Bangladesh.

Like the Russian Federation, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan, the CIS members will also be able to utilize this credit line for the import of various commodities from Bangladesh including tea, jute, and jute products. Importers from the CIS countries will have to open a letter of credit in U.S. dollars.

It was also decided in the cabinet meeting that importers will have to repay their loans within 360 days from the date of its utilization. They will also have to pay interest at a fixed rate on their loans.

India

Qaddumi Visits; Views Palestinian Issues, Mideast Talks

BK0804070993 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1615 GMT 7 Apr 93

[Excerpt] The Palestine foreign minister, Mr. Faruq Qaddumi, today ruled out the possibility of the Palestinians pulling out of the west Asia peace talks. Addressing a news conference in New Delhi at the end of his three-day visit to India, he called upon the international community to exert pressure on Israel to allow the deportees to return to their homeland to pave the way for a resumption of negotiation on the 19th of this month. He said the foreign ministers of five Arab nations will meet in Damascus on 14 April to draw up the Arab strategy for the peace talks. [passage omitted]

Further Reportage on Bombay Blasts, Arrests

Pakistani Involvement 'Beyond Doubt'

BK0704150493 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1430 GMT 7 Apr 93

[Text] The union minister of state for home, Mr. P.M. Sayeed, has said that Pakistan's hand in the Bombay and Calcutta bomb blasts has been established beyond doubt. Talking to newsmen at Alapuzha, Kerala, Mr. Sayeed said that the center is taking up the matter at the highest international fora to put an end to such an act. The minister refuted the criticism against the intelligence and security services in the country in the context of the blasts and said they are on par with their counterparts anywhere in the world.

Pawar on Bombay Blasts

BK0704100793 Bangkok THE NATION in English 7 Apr 93 p A 6

[Interview with Sharad Pawar, ex-Indian defense minister who was named Maharashtra state chief minister after the Bombay riots in late 1992, by Yogi Aggarwal of ASSOCIATED NEWS FEATURES in Bombay—date not given; first three paragraphs are introduction]

[Text] Since Bombay was rocked by 13 explosions on Friday March 12, Maharashtra chief minister Sharad Pawar has played a pivotal role in restoring normalcy in the city and directing the efforts of the Bombay Police in the investigation.

Though the police bungled on one occasion in letting out the names of the Memon brothers who executed the bombings in the city before asking for their extradition from Dubayy where they had fled, they have been able to unearth the Indian end of the conspiracy. They fear there might be other blasts in the state because an unspecified amount of the RDX or Semtex explosive is still believed to be around.

Meanwhile Pawar, at one time an aspirant for the prime minister's position at the centre, now seems to be reconciled to managing the state until the next elections. He works long hours and was chiefly instrumental in getting the stock exchange and Air India functioning within a short time.

[Aggarwal] What is the most important thing before your government right now?

[Pawar] To see that absolute normalcy is there. Fortunately the people of Bombay have reacted well to this crisis. They have themselves helped. The government

machinery has been galvanised and they are working day and night. That's why within practically 48 hours we could start the normal transaction business. So my first job is to keep this normalcy.

[Aggarwal] Is there any danger of any communal violence in Bombay?

[Pawar] That is the design. With these attacks there were two elements. One, create serious trouble to major national and financial institutions. That is the reason why they have selected the stock exchange, Air India, five-star hotels, regional passport office. Which will send a signal outside India, especially after Manmohan Singh's very positive budget, to people who were thinking of investing in India.

Along with this, some of the targets selected by the planners, like the fishermen's colony in Mahim, near the Shiv Sena building, the Plaza cinema in Dadar—there their design was that there should be a communal riot. And if there had been communal riots, then probably Bombay would have burned for a few days. That was the thinking. I must say the people responded very well—they realised this was a conspiracy against the country and they acted in a mature manner. The police in Bombay were very alert and that's why we could avoid communal trouble. So they might try to instigate trouble here and there. That is their desperate action to demoralise the police, but nothing will happen.

[Aggarwal] How far have you been able to identify the people who masterminded the bombings?

[Pawar] The main person behind this execution has gone away prior to the blast outside India. Now, unless we get him, we are not able to say who paid him. It seems from those we arrested, their records, their diaries show they have got some contact in a neighbouring country.

[Aggarwal] After these bomb blasts, do you think the communal forces have been strengthened or have they been weakened?

[Pawar] They've come down, because the communal forces were on both sides. A substantial section of the minority (Muslim) population feel that this is very bad. The minority community is very unhappy with them and very angry with them. About the majority (Hindu) community, the way the government acted, the police acted, this has created a confidence in their minds.

They realise this is an international conspiracy to destabilise India and this is an attack on India's economy. Therefore we should not become victims to those who would like to create serious trouble in India. That kind of feeling is there among the middle classes and that is a plus point.

[Aggarwal] Do you think the Congress needs a full-time working president?

[Pawar] You see, the Congress party and members of the All India Congress committee themselves unanimously elected P.V. Narasimha Rao as the Congress president. He's been elected, he's not appointed. And he's also elected by the Congress Party in parliament as the prime minister. There also he's elected. Therefore in both places he came by the democratic process to be occupying these positions. Since he's elected he has to complete his tenure and that's why the general secretaries and others have to take the responsibilities they have been taking.

[Aggarwal] Coming to Bombay, what do you think needs to be done so that it becomes the moving force for the Indian economy?

[Pawar] If you study this (Maharashtra) budget presented by our finance minister, the main thrust of this budget is the means of communication and power generation. And with the industrial policy which might come within another two to three weeks, we have taken a very positive approach to industry, where people who want to invest will definitely feel this is the place to come for investment.

[Aggarwal] Do you intend to involve the private sector in the building of infrastructure acilities like roads and bridges?

[Pawar] We have already involved them in the generation of power—for instance the Tatas. And there are some other units where foreign companies are coming. We would like to involve the private sector in communication, in roads, in the construction of ports, generation of power. We happily welcome them and support them totally.

[Aggarwal] Do you think you will stay in Bombuy or very long or when do you intend to return to Delhi, if at all?

[Pawar] I was not eager to come here but there vas a serious crisis here and my party, my party leader, has selected me and deputed me here to tackle this challenging situation. As soon as normalcy is stored, I have to see now the party is strengthened, I have to see how the Congress Party will get substantial support in the elections. Then I'll be happy to go.

Five More Arrested

BK0704130693 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 7 Apr 93

[Text] A UNI [UNITED NEWS OF INDIA] report from Aurangabad says that five persons allegedly involved in the recent bomb blasts in Bombay were arrested in Ahmednagar yesterday. According to the police, five kg of gold was seized from them.

According to a PTI [PRESS TRUST OF INDIA] report from Bombay, Arif Khan, a right hand man of Philoo Khan, for whom police have launched a manhunt in connection with the bomb explosions, was seriously injured in a shoot out in northwest Bombay this morning. The police acted on a tip-off.

U.S. View on Pakistani Nuclear Capability Queried

BK0704111293 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 27 Mar 93 p 8

[By Jasjit Singh]

[Text] There is more than ample evidence now that Pakistan possesses nuclear weapons. Their Foreign Secretary, Shahryar Khan, had clearly stated in February 1992 that Pakistan possesses the "components of at least one" bomb. Such a claim cannot be made unless a satisfactory assembly and weaponisation has been carried out first. Even conventional bombs are not kept in an assembled form till they are to be actually used. Pakistan is the only State to declare possession of nuclear weapons since the NPT [Nonproliferation Treaty] legitimised the weapons of the Big-Five. And finding itself unable and unwilling to deal with this stark reality, efforts are being vigorously made by the United States to find an alibi in place of policy.

It must be admitted to Pakistan's credit that in trying to solve its problem of establishing the credibility of its bomb, it has managed to convince the Americans that they should not push Pakistan too far lest "radical" forces take over. The fear of losing its leverages, what little exist, seems to compel the US to avoid facing up to the issue squarely. And here, the traditional mind-set of looking at issues in an India-Pakistan framework has led to diversion of focus and policy.

Firstly, the US is persisting in the myth that Pakistan crossed the bomb threshold in the "spring of 1990" when the military reportedly proceeded with the assembly of the bomb. Yet the weight of evidence points towards late-1986 as the time when Pakistan crossed the threshold to bomb status. According to a declassified 1986 memorandum for the US President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, Pakistan had sufficient capability to "build several nuclear devices per year." By 1988, US estimates placed the capability at 4-6 bombs. It is true that Benazir Bhutto had made an assurance in 1989 that further production was halted. It was the stoppage that was resumed in March/April 1990.

Secondly, the current debate is focussed around the argument that India and Pakistan were very close to a war in spring 1990; and this would have led to a nuclear exchange and holocaust. And with continuing tensions therefore, this calls for a South Asian solution. The reality is that Pakistan has been waging a proxy war against India for a number of years: in Punjab since 1982, and J&K [Jammu and Kashmir] since midz 1988. Pakistan escalated this notably in December 1989; and the threats held out to India in January 1990, the attempt to storm the international border in February 1989, rabble-rousing speeches of the Pakistan Premier had raised tensions. But how close were we to war?

India had moved a couple of infantry divisions into Jammu and Kashmir and Punjab to assist the civil administration to maintain law and order. But from all accounts, no tanks and armoured vehicles were deployed. Through those months both the Armoured Divisions continued in their peacetime locations—one of these, 800 km from the border! With the significantly improved relations and contacts with the US, besides the extensive satellite and other sources of information gathering with the US, it is reasonable to assume that the US government was aware of the armour being retained in peacetime locations while a couple of infantry divisions were inducted into the two border states.

India perhaps took a serious risk by not mobilising its strike formations. But it was a calculated move to force Pakistan to show its hand so that there is no doubt about who the aggressor was. It can always be argued that there was serious risk of war in the spring of 1990. But the US, when it wants to cite that period, must make a distinction about the cause (Pakistan escalating violence against India and Indians) and effect. It was patently clear to all of us at that time that Pakistan will stop short of war especially if it cannot perceive its political objectives being served; but that it would use the escalation of tensions to try and legitimise its nuclear bomb. An outbreak of war in no way would have served Indian interests. If there was a risk of war, Pakistan was clearly responsible.

Thirdly, Pakistan seems to have persuaded many Americans that Kashmir is the "core issue" between India and Pakistan and this is connected with the nuclear issue. But our American (and Pakistani) friends would do well to pause and reflect on how does Pakistan come into the picture in J&K? What is its locus standi in the matter? In which way is the Pakistani invasion, occupation, and annexation (of one-third of J&K) any different from Saddam Husayn's invasion and annexation of Kuwait? The UN resolutions, that Pakistan talks of, require Pakistan to vacate that aggression. The reality is that between 1966 and 1984 Kashmir was not a critical or core issue for Pakistan although Pakistan kept it alive. With the growth of nuclear capability Pakistan not only concurrently raised the level of tensions, but linked up the nuclear issue with J&K.

Fourthly, treating Pakistan's nuclear proliferation as an India-Pakistan problem is fundamentally unsound; and no solutions can be found on this basis except some confidence-building measures. For example, what about the effect on Iran of a nuclear (even if capped) Pakistan? On the other hand, Indian security concerns relate to larger issues and areas where Pakistan is only a lesser factor. China's growing military and nuclear might, nuclear proliferation consequent to Soviet disintegration, and a host of other factors impinge on the subject .

Fifthly, Pakistan projects a view of a sense of threat from India. This perception has been fuelled and sustained by the military-bureaucratic complex which controls an inordinate portion of Pakistan's power structure to retain that hold. The US with its commitment to democracy should be sensitive to the need for a more balanced approach. At

the same time it is obvious that if Pakistan actually felt a threat of India it would not wage a proxy war.

The problem for Pakistan was to acquire not only legitimacy for its bomb but also make it credible without paying too high a price. After all, the nuclear weapon would have no utility if the world—especially Indians, did not believe that Pakistan has it. This has been largely achieved; and that is why Pakistan is ready for "capping". American fears of an open-ended nuclear arms race are neither realistic nor credible. On the other hand, the US, which kept one eye closed when Pakistan was pursuing its clandestine weapon programme and provided massive aid which indirectly supported this programme, seems to have reconciled to a nuclear-armed Pakistan. Even the Pressler amendment is likely to be waived this year.

Pakistan's declaration of its bomb status is a challenge to the non-proliferation efforts of the international community. To link it with the threat of war three years ago would be an outright obfuscation of the truth. The US needs to deal with proliferation without dragging us in. But there is no reason why India should legitimise Pakistan's clandestine bomb. We cannot ignore it, and we need to evolve our own set of responses.

Bomb Found at Tamil Nadu Thermal Power Plant

BK0704144593 Madras DINAMALAR in Tamil 27 Mar 93 p 6

[Text] Neyveli, 27 Mar—A bomb was discovered in the maximum security Neyveli thermal power plant yesterday. Yesterday, there were simultaneous bomb threats at three places in Neyveli. On this, police sources said:

A control board room is located in the first unit of the Neyveli thermal power plant. This maximum security section monitors the generation of electricity. It contains hydrogen gas pipes. Outsiders are banned from entering this section. A letter received by the Neyveli Lignite Corporation [NLC] yesterday claimed that a bomb had been planted in the unit control board room. Following this, NLC security officer Thankarajan and his team went to the spot. After evacuating all those present there, they carried out a thorough check and found a bomb in the room. It was a plastic bomb with two wires. The marking in English—Bomb-93 LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam], U.S.A. [United States of America]—was found on it. It was carefully removed by the security officers. After being defused, it is now being kept in water at the NLC security office.

A sniffer dog was summoned immediately. After going in and around the unit control room section for scent, it did not grab anybody and lay down in a corner. A thorough probe has now been launched by the NLC security officers on this. They say that only someone working in the unit could have planted the bomb as outsiders cannot have any access to the section.

It is said that in the event of a blast, the bomb would have caused heavy damage to the entire city of Neyveli. Because the place where the bomb was located contains hydrogen pipes, in the event of a blast hydrogen gas would have also added to the colossal disaster. A major calamity was averted due to the timely action taken by the NLC security officers.

Besides this, letters carrying bomb threats were received at two more places in Neyveli yesterday. The director of the Power Engineering Training Center in Neyveli also received a bomb threat. On an investigation by security officers, it was found to be a hoax. The office of the Ultra High Frequency (UHF) telephone tower in Neyveli also received a threatening letter. Neyveli police investigated and found no trace of any bomb.

Generally, threatening letters received in Neyveli used to be in Tamil. But, contrary to this, all the three letters received yesterday were in English and bore LTTE initials. The bomb recovered also bore the markings—LTTE, U.S.A. Therefore, the LTTE is suspected to have been involved in these incidents.

In Neyveli area, the number of LTTE sympathizers is greater. Last year, sympathizers were arrested and later released. They are also suspected of being involved in this. The discovery of the bomb in the maximum security NLC area has created a panic in the area.

Prime Minister Rao Visits Thailand

WA0804121093

For reportage on Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao's visit to Thailand, including talks with Thai Prime Minister Chuan Likphai, see the Thailand section of the 7 April East Asia DAILY REPORT and subsequent issues.

Commentary Views Rao Visit to Thailand

BK0704124493 Delhi All India Radio General Overseas Service in English 1010 GMT 7 Apr 93

[Commentary by journalist Harish M. Das]

[Text] The prime minister, Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, has gone on a three-day visit to Thailand on his way to Dhaka to attend the twice postponed SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation] summit. The prime minister's visit to Bangkok comes within three weeks of India's opening sectoral dialogue with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the fastest growing region in the world. His visit is to reinvigorate high-level political dialogue with the Thai Government.

Relations between India and Thailand have grown remarkably, particularly since the late 1980's. Mr. Rao had visited Thailand in 1989 in his capacity as External Affairs Minister. He had attended the first meeting of the Indo-Thai Joint Commission established during the visit of Thai prime minister, Chatchai Chunhawan, to India earlier that year. Mr. Rao's visit is expected to give a boost to bilateral relation which had grown steadily in

recent years, especially since Rajiv Gandhi's visit to Bangkok in 1986. The end of Cold War and the growing pressures on the U.S. to scale down its military involvement in Asia has particularly facilitated the development of relations between the two countries. The ties had earlier been affected by the superpower rivalry and this was reflected in their respective positions on the Cambodian question.

The prime minister would use the opportunity to intensify the high-level political dialogue between India and Thailand and underline the significance of a new orientation in India's foreign policy in which members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations occupy a key position as close maritime neighbors bound by traditional cultural and other links.

The economic reforms initiated by India have opened up more avenues for forging economic relations between the two countries which had grown considerably. Bilateral trade amounted to almost $1 billion last year. The are a number of joint ventures in Thailand where major industrial houses had participated. Balance of trade has been in India's favor since 1991. India's exports to Thailand accounted for $159.21 million between April and November last year as compared to imports worth $44.43 million.

The balance of trade in a modest turn over at the beginning of 80's, which has been traditionally in India's favor, moved sharply against India during 1983, 1984, and 1985. The negative balance of trade in 1983 and 1984 could be explained by sustantial imports of rice by India. In 1985, India imported large quantities of moong [green gram] and udad [black gram] beans and sugar from Thailand rendering the balance of trade favorable to Thailand. The trend was reversed in 1986, when there was a marginal trade surplus in India's favor. In 1987, a substantial trade surplus or Baht 1.287 billion was recorded in India's favor. This was possible because of our increased exports of cut and polished stones, cotton, ordinary chemicals, dyes and dye stuffs and some engineering items. In 1988, the balance tilted once again in favor of Thailand by a figure of Baht 1.47 billion. India has also been buying paper board, paper making material, plastic material, carbon black, and metallic ore, slag and (?ash) from Thailand.

During the last two years, there has been a tremendous increase in exports to India of machinery and appliances, including electrical machinery, from Thailand. The other new items which have shown growth are cashew and betel nuts, skin and leather and synthetic staple fiber.

Thailand's highly respected elder statesman and former deputy prime minister, Dr. Khoman, has made an impassionate plea for closer and deeper Indo-Thai relations consistent with the age-old ties and potential for mutually beneficial interaction. He has also seen India emerging as a major power in the region and outside and so India and Thailand can cooperate in Southeast Asia.

Iran

Vice President To Resign in 'Unexpected' Reshuffle

LD0804091693 Tehran IRNA in English 0809 GMT 8 Apr 93

[Text] Tehran, April 8, IRNA—A "startling but unexpected" reshuffling in the top echelons among the aides of President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani is reportedly in the pipeline, according to the "TEHRAN TIMES" quoting an informed source.

The English daily said that First Vice-President Hasan Habibi was resigning from his post to which he was appointed in August 1989.

"Most probably the post of vice-president would be abolished," said the daily quoting the unnamed source.

At present Vice-President Hamid Mirzadeh is in charge of executive affairs while Habibi holds the post equivalent to prime minister.

Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati and Minister of Post, Telegraph and Telephone (PTT) Mohammad Gharazi are the two persons being mentioned for the post which up to now was held by Habibi.

Political circles in Tehran have failed to pin-point the exact name for the post of first vice-president at this stage.

The daily quoted another source as saying, "Well, it's too early to name the replacement of Dr. Habibi and we have to wait and see for the time being."

Another source preferred Foreign Minister Velayati for the post due to his rich foreign policy experiences and above all his reputation both abroad and inside the country.

A third political observer said that such a change was due long ago. "To be frank, I was thinking that the president will make these changes after his June elections for the second term in office," he said.

"Anyway, if it's going on then I would like to say sooner the better and let the changes take place," he said.

No speculation is being made about the future post of Habibi, born in 1936 in Tehran. He briefly became minister of higher education in the provisional government in 1979 and was one of the main authors of the constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The longest surviving foreign minister, Velayati was appointed to the present post in 1981 in the cabinet of then Prime Minister Mir Husayn Musavi.

Velayati, a pediatrician, was appointed deputy health minister and remained in the post up to 1980 before he was elected to the Majlis in 1980.

Gharazi devoted himself to the Organisation of the Islamic Revoutionary Committee after the establishment of the Islamic system in Iran.

He worked as deputy governor of Kurdistan province and then governor of Khuzestan in 1980. Gharazi was appointed oil minister in 1981 in Prime Minister Musavi's cabinet. Finally he was named minister of PTT in 1985, a post which he still holds.

* Shooting Between Guards, Basij, Police in Tehran

93LA0014A London KEYHAN in Persian 18 Mar 93 p 2

[Text] A few days ago, a severe shooting took place between a group of guards and Basij resistance forces over the possession of a building on the corner of Marjan Street and "Neufchatel," formerly Churchill Street, in Tehran, which lasted for hours. According to a report by REUTER from Tehran, in an attempt to end these skirmishes, the police entered the arena as a third armed force and began shooting in the air. The details of the incident and the number of casualties have not been announced. The incident began when a group of armed paramilitary Basij members, who are all high school and college students, prevented the entry of the Guard Corps officials assigned to the Health Department of the Guard Corps into a four-story building. Even though the Basij rank below the Guard Corps in military standing, since they enjoy sufficient independence, they do not want to take orders from the guards. After the confrontation between the Basij and guards at the entrance of the building, shooting occurred between the two sides, and the guards asked the Health Center guards for additional forces. With the arrival of the new guards on the scene, the conflict, which had begun in the early morning hours of 18 Esfand [9 Mar], escalated and continued until 1600. In the past, at times, fights have broken out between individuals affiliated with various sections of the armed forces over the possession of a building. Last September, the police and the guards fired shots at each other, and one person was injured.

Official Criticizes Clinton Remarks on Terrorism

LD0804103793 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 8 Apr 93

[Text] In response to U.S. President Clinton's recent remarks at a joint news conference with Egyptian President Husni Mubarak that his government is determined to confront Iran because of its opposition to the Middle East peace talks and its support for terrorism, the Foreign Ministry spokesperson said:

It seems that these remarks are made with the objective of covering up for the crisis and confusion prevailing in U.S. diplomacy in confronting the complicated problems of the Middle East. In a world in which democracy and freedom of thought are said to be principles of its new order, those who claim to champion democracy must not have dictatorial confrontation with different views and thoughts.

Referring to methods of state terrorism, the Foreign Ministry spokesperson said: Dozens of people are martyred and made homeless in the occupied territories by the Zionists every day while the efforts and legitimate demands of the Muslims and freedom-loving people of Egypt are crushed cruelly by the regime ruling over that country. Yet, the U.S. Government, despite its pretences to oppose terrorism and to support human rights, is the supporter and protector of such regimes.

Mubarak, Clinton Conference Proof of U.S. 'Confusion'

LD0804080993 Tehran IRNA in English 0721 GMT 8 Apr 93

[Text] Tehran, April 8, IRNA—The press conference at the White House by Bill Clinton and Husni Mubarak Tuesday and Clinton's position towards the Islamic Republic of Iran is proof of the confusion of the policy makers in the United States.

Clinton who is finding himself hard pressed between the two essentially opposing forces of offering unconditional support to the Zionist regime and at the same time deal intelligently with the expectations of the Arabs, is now trying to steer a mid-course as escapeway from the deadlocked Arab-Israeli peace talks.

He says that his administration is determined to face with what he terms Iran's terrorism and its antagonism with the peace process for the Middle East.

On the other hand, Mubarak, too is trying to cope with the economic boycott and security problems and is hopelessly trying to offer a democratic vision of his administration and mask the true reason for the unrest in many American towns and cities so that he can better suppress and torture freedom lovers at home.

Mubarak says today the Iranians are stronger than they were in the past, and that they are trying to destabilize various countries and especially Egypt.

The Egyptian Government that claims to adhere to a government of the people and recognize the freedom of Muslims has martyred at least 120 Muslims over the past few months and issued death sentences for 29 Muslim revolutionaries in that country.

The present evidence and the statements by the accused Muslims in that country is clear proof of the systematic torturing of Muslims by the irreligious regime in Egypt.

On the other hand Clinton's administration though claiming to be committed to the human rights and peace and democracy has throughout its short life thus far lost no chance for antagonizing Muslims and supporting cruel non-Islamic governments in Muslim countries. It

does not even conceal the increasing concern of the Americans about the steady merging of Islamicism.

The hasty pronouncement of the U.S. position to the issue, contact by letters with terrorist antagonists of the Islamic government, increasing efforts for tightening the economic sanctions against the Islamic Republic of Iran and inciting the regional rulers to antagonize the government and people of Iran are devices the inadequacy of which Clinton's adminstration is yet too young to understand.

Jewish capitalists, Zionist news and propaganda circles and Arab groups observing internal and external bottlenecks in the economic system of the US society and realizing the tactical weakness of the new people at the White House are finding the situation favorable for involving Clinton at the Middle East trap. By aggrandizing the threat by Islamic Iran and the rise of the revolutionary Muslims in the region they are in fact offering Clinton a new window through which to look out.

The result of that has been solely to offer the Zionist regime new opportunities and further complicate the situation which will eventualy weaken the camp of Muslims and Arabs in their alignment against the insatiable greed of the Zionist regime.

The Arabs have had no initiative in the talks and are unlikely to find an opportunity to maneuver and will only experience division and lost face.

The efforts by Husni Mubarak for playing a role in the security of the Persian Gulf states and raising doubts in the minds of the regional shaykhs about the usefulness of their talks with their northern neighbor (Iran) will only threaten the security of the Persian Gulf and will offer an excuse for the presence in the region of other powers.

The Arab rulers would do good to remember that strained relations between Iran and the Persian Gulf states and impairing the talks between Iran and the United Arab Emirates over the Abu Musa island would benefit only Israel. They might also want to think about the question of the coutries that will suffer most as a result of the insecurity in the Persian Gulf.

'Hidden Hands' Said Prolonging Karabakh Crisis

NC0804061093 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0330 GMT 8 Apr 93

[Unattributed commentary from the "News Reports" feature]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] There have been many vicissitudes during the two-year Karabakh conflict. During this period several efforts have been made to solve this war through peaceful means and political dialogue, but hidden hands that saw their interests as lying in the continuation of this war prevented these efforts from bearing fruit.

During this period Iran expressed its readiness to mediate in the Karabakh conflict and sent delegations to Azerbaijan and Armenia. When these efforts were beginning to meet with success, however, foreign elements prevented peace from being established in this area.

Later on a conference was held under CSCE supervision on establishing peace between Azerbaijan and Armenia. But apart from holding various sessions, this conference did not achieve anything.

Since Armenia's offensive on Kelbadzhar early last week, the war has escalated. After occupying Kelbadzhar, Armenian soldiers concentrated their attacks on Fizuli, Kubatli, and Gyandzha. By opening new fronts on Azerbaijani territory, Armenia is intensifying the war. This could prove extremely serious. The recent attacks by Armenia are overt aggression and violate Azerbaijan's national sovereignty.

Fierce battles in western and southwestern Azerbaijan are continuing and 20 percent of this Republic's territory has been occupied. Following Armenia's offensive, Azerbaijan called for an immediate UN Security Council session. The body met yesterday and issued a statement calling for an immediate halt to the Armenian forces' attacks and for these forces to withdraw from the occupied areas.

What can be seen in this phase of Armenia's offensive is that some governments see their interests as lying in the further escalation of this war. It also can be seen that by arming one side, these governments are trying to push the area into insecurity and violence. But in the midst of all this it is Azerbaijan and Armenia's interests and resources that are being destroyed.

Since the outset of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Karabakh, Iran has continued to stress the need for political dialogue as the only solution to this crisis. Following the escalation of the war this week, our Foreign Ministry condemned Armenia's offensive against Azerbaijan and called for an immediate halt to these attacks. Iran has stated that respect for international laws and rights and the territorial integrity and sovereignty of governments, as well as the non-alteration of international borders, constitute the major conditions needed before nations can peacefully coexistence. Iran emphasizes that the policy of choosing nonpolitical methods and escalating the war instead of establishing peace will only lead to an ambiguous and dangerous future for the Caucasus.

Ahl al-Bayt Assembly Condemns Armenian Aggression

LD0604162293 Tehran IRNA in English 1449 GMT 6 Apr 93

[Text] Tehran, April 6, IRNA—The world 'Ahl al-Bayt' assembly in a statement here Tuesday denounced the new Armenian attacks on Azerbaijan and called for an

immediate ceasefire and withdrawal of Armenian troops from the occupied territory.

The statement termed the heavy Armenian offensive as "part of global arrogance's plot against Muslim nations."

It stressed on patching up disputes through mutual understanding and peaceful solutions.

"The continued silence of big powers and international circles, the so-called supporters of peace and human rights is confirmation of the recent Armenian moves. The same silence that they have adopted toward the Serbian crimes in Bosnia-Herzegovina", the statement read.

The communique also called on all freedom lovers and independent nations to condemn the recent Armenian crimes.

The 'Ahl al-Bayt' assembly called after the infallible household of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), seeks to propagate the genuine teachings of Islam.

Ruhani Comments on GCC Meeting, Other Issues

LD0704154393 Tehran IRNA in English 1458 GMT 7 Apr 93

[Text] Tehran, Apr. 7 OANA-IRNA—Vice Speaker Hasan Ruhani regretted here today that the recent statement by the Persian Gulf Cooperative Council (P)GCC against Iran was more in the interest of the United States and the Zionist regime.

Addressing the Majlis open session he made it clear that the Islamic Republic will not allow any country including the big powers to meddle in the internal affairs and territorial integrity of the country. "Iran does not covet other countries' soil. If it was covetous it would have done such a thing quite easily when Kuwait was occupied," he pointed out.

The (P)GCC statement concerning the three Iranian islands in the Persian Gulf was issued Monday in Riyadh at the end of the 46th ministerial meeting of its six member states—Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Bahrain and the UAE [United Arab Emirates].

Ruhani, who is also secretary of the Supreme National Security Council (SNSC) said "Washington in a bid to solve its internal problems, justify its illegal interference in various world spots and sell more of its military arsenal, is in need of such statements for sowing discord among world countries.

"The Zionist regime in order to justify its aggressions and drag the Arabs to the negotiating table, and the North African states in a bid to justify their internal problems and their repressive actions against their people, want to introduce the Islamic Republic as a danger threatening the regional countries."

Such statements, would not only not benefit the said states, but would also hamper neighbourliness and Islamic unity, said Ruhani and expressed hope that the (P)GCC would consider its long term interests and would not take any action to the contrary that would benefit others.

He reiterated that there was no shift in the legal and political status of the Iranian islands of Abu-Musa and the Lesser and Greater Tunbs, and said Iran as a strong country has no other thoughts except good neighbourliness and having fraternal ties with countries of the region.

Ruhani who chaired the session in the absence of Speaker 'Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri who is on a tour of East European countries, switched to the Karabakh issue, and said the Islamic Republic was for putting aside of the differences through political negotiations since the onset of the clashes and mediated between the warring sides.

But unfortunately, he regretted, the measures did not bear fruit due to certain countries which hindered the talks and were not willing to solve the clashes, especially through Iran's mediation. Iran has strongly reacted to the new Armenian military offensive in Karabakh and demanded pullout of troops from Azerbaijani soil.

* Three Thousand Guards Reportedly Fight in Sudan

93LA0011A London KEYHAN in Persian 4 Feb 93 pp 1, 3

[Text] The reporters sent by the MRD television station to the war-stricken region in southern Sudan told Reuter news agency: At least 3,000 Iranian guards are fighting the Sudanese separatists in southern Sudan. The representative of the German television delegation to Sudan said: The camera crew of the delegation has filmed the soldiers of the Islamic Republic fighting alongside Sudanese forces against the Christians. The Khartoum government also uses the soldiers of some other Persian Gulf countries to suppress the Christians and their opponents. Members of the MRD television delegation also said: Iranian guards are armed with German-made G-3 automatic machine guns that were sold to that country until 1989. The above-mentioned television station is affiliated with ARD, the German government television. In the past 10 years in the Sudanese civil war, half a million people lost their lives and 4.5 million people are homeless. After receiving military equipment from Iran and China, war and bloodshed between Arab soldiers in northern Sudan and the Christians and the Africans in the south escalated.

While the Islamic Republic Government confesses to "brotherly aid" to Sudan, it has always denied the presence of its armed personnel in Sudan. But in a visit that Hashemi-Rafsanjani made to Khartoum after participating in the Islamic Conference in Senegal in 1991, Mohsen Reza'i, the commander general of the Guard Corps and 'Ali Fallahian, the minister of information, were also accompanying him. From then on, visits by high-ranking officials of the Islamic Republic to Sudan

have been among the common programs of the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic. Hasan al-Bashir, the president of Sudan, also visited Tehran and from then on, other high-ranking Sudanese officials visited Tehran.

Egyptian and Algerian politicians as well as the media of those countries have frequently verified the interference of the Islamic Republic in the unrest in those two countries. Also, it is not the first time that the media have reported on the participation of Iranian guards in the civil wars of the region of Hasan al-Bashir, the president of Sudan, and the rebels in the south who are either Christians or practice primitive worship of nature.

In the meantime, the Islamic Republic denied the report that it has delivered the Iraqi fighter planes that had fled to Iran to avoid being destroyed during the Persian Gulf war. Previously newspapers reported that the airplanes of the black rebels in southern Sudan were placed at the disposal of the government of Khartoum [as published].

* Corporation for Foreign Investment Formed

93LA0011C London KEYHAN in Persian 4 Feb 93 p 4

[Text] For the purpose of investment; joint production; and industrial, mining, trade, financial, and service cooperation abroad, with a 10-billion-rial investment, the government will form the Iranian Foreign Investment Company.

Last week in the Majles the report on the second round of discussions by the Economic and Finance Affairs Committee was examined, and the single article and its notes were ratified. The text of the single article and its notes are as follows.

Single Article. To implement Article 2 of the charter of the Iranian Investment and Economic and Technical Aid Organization, for the purpose of investment and joint cooperation with actual and legal persons in production, industrial, mining, trade, financial, and service units abroad, the Iranian Foreign Investment Company, referred to as the Company in this law, shall be formed.

The Company shall have independent legal status. All the shares of the Company shall belong to the government, and it shall be exempt from all general government laws and regulations, and it shall be subject to those general regulations that are specified. Situations not anticipated in this law and the charter of the Company shall be subject to the trade law regulations.

The initial investment of the Company shall be 10 billion rials, divided into 1,000-rial shares, and shall be placed at the disposal of the Iranian Investment and Economic and Technical Aid Organization from the funds of the shares. Later increases or decreases shall be made upon the approval of the General Assembly.

The members of the General Assembly shall be comprised of:

1. The minister of economic affairs and finance, who shall chair the General Assembly;
2. The minister of commerce;
3. The minister of foreign affairs;
4. The director of the Plan and Budget Organization;
5. An industrial minister chosen by the president;
6. The minister of construction jihad.

Note 1. The Cabinet may make decisions regarding the transfer to the Company of government shares and government-affiliated units in foreign companies.

Note 2. The value of government shares and government-affiliated units in the investments abroad that will be transferred to the Company shall be determined on the basis of evaluations proposed by the minister of economic affairs and finance with the approval of the General Assembly of the Company.

Note 3. The Company shall be allowed to allocate up to 50 percent of its special annual profit for investment expenditures, upon the approval of the General Assembly, in the investment savings account. That portion of the special profit of the Company that is allocated to investment expenditures in the implementation of this note with the approval of the General Assembly shall be exempt from income taxes.

Note 4. The charter of the Company shall be proposed by the minister of economic affairs and finance, verified by the National Administrative and Employment Affairs Organization, and approved by the Cabinet.

* Ayatollah Sadr Declared Marja' Replacing Kho'i

93LA0011B London KEYHAN in Persian 4 Feb 93 p 3

[Interview with Mohammad Baqer Hakim, head of the Supreme Council of Islamic Revolution of Iraq, by French News Agency (AFP); place and date not given]

[Text] The mass media of Baghdad, all of which is controlled by the government, announced Ayatollah Mohammad Sadeq Sadr as the successor to Grand Ayatollah Abolqasem Kho'i, the great source of emulation of Shiites, who died last year in Najaf.

Mohammad Baqer Hakim, the head of the Supreme Council of Islamic Revolution of Iraq, who lives in Tehran, condemned this action of the Baghdad government in an interview with AFP, considering it the result of pressure imposed on the jurisprudential centers in Najaf by Baghdad in order to "prevent the appointment of the true successor of Ayatollah Kho'i."

He added: Ayatollah Sadr himself knows that he is not competent for this position and has only accepted this position out of fear of the Iraqi Government.

A majority of the clerics in Qom believe that the only person deserving to succeed Ayatollah Kho'i is Grand Ayatollah Mohammad Reza Golpayegani, who resides in Qom.

* Various New Appointments Announced

93LA0011D Tehran KEYHAN-E HAVA'I in Persian 10 Feb 93 p 4

[Text] Ahad Qaza'i and Mohammad Sadeq Nuri were appointed the head consuls of Iran to Hyderabad in India and the autonomous Republic of Nakhichevan, respectively. These appointments were made upon the suggestion of the minister of foreign affairs and the approval of the president.

In decrees issued by the head of national registration, Seyyed 'Abbas Ahmadi was appointed administrative and financial deputy director; Mohammad Javad Haqshenas as birth certificate and legal deputy director; Hadi Rahmat the deputy for plans and programs; and Mohammad Reza Rahmani as adviser and head of special inspections; and they began their work.

Nepal

King Suspends Winter Session of Parliment

BK0704141893 Hong Kong AFP in English 1350 GMT 7 Apr 93

[Text] Kathmandu, April 7 (AFP)—King Birendra of Nepal Wednesday prorogued the fourth session of parliament a day after the house had agreed to set up a parliamentary committee to review a controversial water sharing agreement with India.

The king's decision to discontinue the session after 31 days came much to the relief of Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala, who had come under strong criticism from the left over the Tanakpur barrage accord, parliamentary sources said.

Leftist opposition parties had slammed Koirala's ruling Nepali Congress Party for signing the agreement in 1991 without parliament's consent before agreeing late Tuesday on the formation of the all-party special parliamentary committee (SPC) to evaluate the pact, an official of the parliamentary secretariat said.

"After long discussion the leftist opposition parties, the Congress and the rightist group agreed unanimously to pass the resolution proposing for the formation of an SPC", the source said.

The SPC is composed of eight MP's from the ruling Party, four from the Nepali Communist Party (United Marxist and Leninist) and one each from Nepal Sadbhavana Party (Goodwill Party), the National Democratic Party and the United Peoples Front.

The leader of the Nepal Peasants and Workers Party Narayan Man Bijukchhe and leader of the NCP (United) Bhim Bahadur Shrestha were nominated as special invities of the SPC, the source said.

"This Committee has been instructed to evaluate the Tanakpur Treaty signed by the Koirala Government with India in 1991 without the consent of the parliament", Marxist-Leninist MP Hiranya Lal Shrestha said.

"The SPC has been told to submit its report within 21 days from the date of the start of the fifth session of the Parliamant due to open in the second half of June this year", Shrestha said.

Political observers here said though the unanimous decision to form the SPC had "somehow embarassed" the premier, who wanted the accord endorsed with a simple majority vote, it had "created a good rapport between the ruling party and the political opposition."

"This unanimous decision ... will help develop the democratic system that had been restored after 30 years partyless Panchayat polity", UML member Dron Prasad Acharya said.

A highly placed parliamentary source predicted the Tanakpur issue wo@[d be discussed and voted on at a joint session of parliament when the Marxist and Leninist faction are expected to support the Koirala Government in order to maintain good rapport with India.

"But the rightist NDP and the extreme left United Peoples Front are expected to abstain if not oppose the Koirala Government during the voting", the same source said.

During the just-ended 31-day session, 13 bills were passed including the Income Tax amendment bill 1993, the Press and Publication Act dealing with radio and television broadcasting, and the Civil Service amendment bill 1993.

But the amendment bill of the Nepal Treaty Act has been sent to the legal committee for drafting without interfering with article 126 of the constitution which deals with the agreement o@ the water resouces, the parliamentary secretariat source said.

Communist Rally Attacks Dam Project With India

BK0604150893 Hong Kong AFP in English 1451 GMT 6 Apr 93

[Text] Kathmandu, April 6 (AFP)—Four factions of the Nepal Communist Party (NCP) held a joint demonstration Tuesday to commemorate the deaths of Nepalese citizens killed three years ago in pro-democracy protests, witnesses said.

Extreme left factions of the NCP rallied in memory of their countrymen who were killed April 6, 1990 when police opened fire on them during a demonstration for the restoration of democracy to replace the then 30-year-old Panchayat partyless system.

The demonstrators also used the occasion to criticise the government of Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala

and call for the cancellation of an accord with India to build a hydroelectric dam partially on Nepalese soil.

The Tanakpur barrage has been at the center of political controversy since Koirala's government approved the project without parliament's consent.

Pakistan

Reportage on Russian Foreign Minister's Visit

Kozyrev Meets With Sharif

BK0704114593 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 7 Apr 93

[Text] An agreement on basic principles of relations between Pakistan and Russian Federation was initialed in Islamabad today by the minister of state for foreign affairs, Mr. Mohammad Siddique Khan Kanjoo, and the visiting foreign minister of Russia, Mr. Andrey Kozyrev. The agreement will be signed during the visit of the prime minister, Mr. Mohammad Nawaz Sharif, to Moscow later this year.

Earlier, Mr. Kozyrev called on the prime minister and discussed a wide range of subjects, including Kashmir, Afghanistan, and Tajikistan. The Russian foreign minister said his country considers Pakistan's position in South Asia as very important. He said Russia wants to do away with the legacy of foreign policy of former Soviet Union and desires to adopt a balanced foreign policy in the context of South Asia.

The prime minister assured Mr. Kozyrev that Pakistan supports the policies pursued by President Boris Yeltsin and is ready to cooperate with him for making a new beginning in the region.

Talks Held With Sharif, Ishaq Khan

BK0704145293 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 7 Apr 93

[Text] Pakistan and the Russian Federation today signed an agreement on the basic principles of relations between the two countries. The agreement was initialed by the Russian foreign minister, Mr. Andrey Kozyrev, and the minister of state for foreign affairs, Mr. Mohammad Siddique Khan Kanjoo, in Islamabad. The agreement will be formally ratified during prime minister's visit to Moscow later this year. The date of the prime minister's visit will be fixed in due course of time. After the signing ceremony, the prime minister, Mr. Mohammad Nawaz Sharif, said he is looking forward to his visit to Russia. He underlined the need for strong friendly relations with Russia.

[Begin Sharif recording] There is a new beginning of relationship between Russia and Pakistan, and of course it will be our endeavor to build up very strong relations with Russia. We support the changes which have taken place in the former Soviet Union. We support the policies now being pursued by Russia, by President Yeltsin. I am a personal supporter of his policies, and of course my government supports wholeheartedly the policies which are being pursued by president and his government, and it is our keen desire to build up our relations with Russia and have a very strong relationship. Thank you very much. [end recording]

The Russian foreign minister reciprocated the sentiments of the prime minister and said the Russian Federation considers Pakistan a very important country in South Asia.

Mr. Andrey Kozyrev called on the prime minister, Mr. Mohammad Nawaz Sharif. During the meeting, they exchanged views on regional issues with special emphasis on situation in occupied Kashmir, Afghanistan, and Tajikistan. The Russian foreign minister explained that his country wanted to do away with the legacy of foreign policy of former Soviet Union and desired to adopt a balanced foreign policy in the context of South Asia.

Briefing newsmen after the talks, a Foreign Office spokesman said the prime minister has made a strong appeal to the Afghan leaders and tanzimat [organizations] to release all prisoners of war of the former Soviet Union who may still be held captive. The Russian foreign minister was assured that Pakistan would leave no stone unturned in order to bring about the earliest possible release of all prisoners of war. Mr. Kozyrev thanked the prime minister for the efforts made by Pakistan to bring about the release of prisoners of war. A joint Pakistan-Russia commission has been established to coordinate action in this regard.

Mr. Andrey Kozyrev also called on the president, Mr. Ghulam Ishaq Khan, at the Aiwan-i-Sadr [Presidential Palace] this afternoon and conveyed to him the greetings of President Yeltsin. During the meeting, which lasted for 45 minutes, the president assured the Russian foreign minister that Pakistan looks forward to further develop bilateral cooperation in all fields. He expressed his satisfaction with regard to the initialing of the agreed basic text of a treaty on bilateral relations between the two countries and said this would provide good basis for further strengthening of existing bilateral ties. The Russian foreign minister said that President Yeltsin is similarly keen to develop Russia's relations with Pakistan, which he regarded as an important country in the region. He reaffirmed that Russia treated its relations with Pakistan as an independent phenomenon not to be affected by its relations with any third country. During the meeting, bilateral relations and the situation in the region, including Afghanistan and Tajikistan, were discussed. Both Pakistan and Russia shared a keen desire to see unity, peace, and stability strengthening in these countries through dialogue and national reconciliation.

Further on Talks

BK0704164893 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1600 GMT 7 Apr 93

[Excerpt] Pakistan and Russia have initialed a treaty to promote bilateral relations. The initials were appended by the Russian foreign minister and the Pakistan minister of state for foreign affairs during Mr. Andrey Kozyrev's meeting with the prime minister in Islamabad today. The treaty, which defines fields of cooperation, will be signed by Mr. Mohammad Nawaz Sharif and the Russian president, Mr. Yeltsin, during the prime minister's visit to Russia, which is expected to take place during autumn this year. After the signing ceremony, the prime minister said the treaty is a new beginning of strong relations between Pakistan and Russia. He said Pakistan supports the policies being pursued by President Yeltsin.

During the meeting, the prime minister and the Russian foreign minister discussed a wide range of subjects, including Kashmir, Afghanistan, and Tajikistan. Mr. Kozyrev said Russia wants to do away with the legacy of the former Soviet Union's foreign policy and desires to adopt a balanced policy in the context of South Asia.

Earlier, the Russian foreign minister held talks with the minister of state for foreign affairs, Mr. Mohammad Siddique Khan Kanjoo. They discussed bilateral relations. They also decided to negotiate a trade protocol for the current year and resolve the ruble-rupee exchange rate issue. Other issues covered in the talks included Kashmir and nuclear nonproliferation in South Asia. The Russian foreign minister, without taking sides on the Kashmir issue, wished that both India and Pakistan should reach a solution of this problem. Later, the Russian foreign minister called on the president, who welcomed the initialing of the treaty between Pakistan and Russia. [passage omitted]

Minister's Washington Meeting 'Very Positive'

BK0804091693 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Overseas Service in English 0800 GMT 8 Apr 93

[Text] Pakistan and the United States have agreed to revive their relations and identify ways and means to give them a boost. This was stated by the federal minister and the special envoy of the prime minister, Chaudhary Nissar Ali Khan, while talking to newsmen after a 45-minute meeting with the U.S. Secretary of State Mr. Christopher in Washington last night. He desceribed the meeting as very positive. Chaudhary Nissar Ali Khan said that the secretary of state and deputy Mr. Clifton Wharton, whom he met earlier, understood Pakistan's viewpoint on terrorism and a need to work with Pakistan in efforts to combat it in the region. He said that he conveyed to Mr. Christopher Pakistan's serious concern on the issue that the certain quarters were intent on putting the blame on Pakistan for certain troubles which had no reference or relevance to Pakistan. The special envoy said that Pakistan wanted to combat terrorism with the help and support of the United States. Replying to a question, he said that he had raised the Kashmir issue during the meetings at the State Department and urged the United States to play a role in resolving the issue. He also drew the attention of the secretary of state toward grave violations of human rights by India in occupied Kashmir. Chaudhary Nissar Ali Khan also explained Pakistan's stand on nuclear nonproliferation and elaborated Pakistan's proposal for a five-nation conference on nuclear nonprolifertion.

Minister on India's 'Hatching Conspiracies'

BK0804090493 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Overseas Service in English 0800 GMT 8 Apr 93

[Text] The chairman of Senate, Mr. Wasim Sajjad, has said that Pakistan wants to sort out its differences with India in a democratic and political manner. Talking to newsmen in Lahore, he regretted that India was engaged in a campaign by accusing Pakistan for last month's bomb blasts in the Indian city of Bombay. He said the Indian campaign against Pakistan was misguided as Pakistan has always condemned all kinds of terrorism in any part of the world.

Meanwhile, the federal minister for industries, Sheikh Rashid Ahmed, addressing a news conference in Islamabad last night said that India was hatching conspiracies against Pakistan. The people of Pakistan, he said, must thwart the designs of anti-Pakistan forces. He said the purpose of this anti-Pakistan campaign was to create hurdles in the way of Pakistan's rapid economic progress.

Minister Denies Nation Harbors Terrorists

BK0804084793 Islamabad THE PAKISTAN TIMES in English 7 Apr 93 pp 1, 10

[Text] Islamabad, April 6—Federal Interior Minister Ch. [Chaudhary] Shujat Hussain rebutted allegations of harbouring terrorists and said Pakistan does not allow its soil to be used for such nefarious activities. In a strongly worded rejoinder to such allegations made by Minister of State Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali, he said while resigning from the cabinet the former minister made such unfounded and regrettable allegations for his political differences. Giving reasons of his resignation Sardar Asif had indulged in talking about terrorism, he added. This he had done only to get international publicity, otherwise there is no truth whatsoever in the allegation, claimed Ch. Shujat. He said the Prime Minister was concerned about it. The Pakistan Government he said does not allow its soil to be used for such nefarious activities. The Interior Minister said that Sardar Asif had harped on the propaganda of the anti-state elements who are bent upon damaging the honour and prestige of the country. He said no patriotic Pakistani, despite his political differences, could say such things. He said it is a matter of concern and regret that Sardar Asif resorted to such utterances merely on the ground of political differences. "In fact he echoed the times of anti-state

elements", he added. He said these false accusations are both against the interests of the country and reality. Sardar Asif has said exactly what enemies of Pakistan are saying, he added.

U.S. 'Double Standard' on Terrorism Viewed

BK0804110793 Lahore PAKISTAN in Urdu 7 Apr 93 p 4

[Editorial: "The U.S. Double Standard"]

[Text] An important meeting held under the chairmanship of Mohammad Siddique Khan Kanjoo, the minister of state for foreign affairs, discussed the U.S. threat to declare Pakistan a terrorist state and described the move as a conspiracy to isolate Pakistan at the international level. The minister of state reiterated the Pakistani stand of strongly opposing and condemning terrorism and does not consider it justifiable in any respect. The allegations about Pakistan's interference in occupied Kashmir are totally unfounded and concocted. Pakistan has been and will continue to provide moral, political, and diplomatic support to the Kashmiris and will not flinch from it under any circumstances.

The meeting expressed concern at the double standard of the United States and said Washington took military action to liberate Kuwait from Iraqi occupation in accordance with UN resolutions, but is doing nothing to free Kashmir from the forcible occupation of India, and, instead, is even pointing fingers at the moral support extended by Pakistan to the oppressed Kashmiris. If the U.S. were to realize its global responsibilities and duties as a superpower, it would feel it imperative to help the Kashmiris achieve their right to self-determination and to support truth and justice. The talk on its part of declaring its age-old ally, Pakistan, a terrorist state does not create a good impression. If Washington desires to continue playing an effective role in international affairs, it must uphold principles and refrain from adopting and applying double standards.

Bosnian President Urges Help in Serbian Attack

BK0704150093 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 7 Apr 93

[Text] President Alija Izetbegovic of Bosnia-Hercegovina, in a letter addressed to President Ghulam Ishaq Khan, has appealed to Pakistan to do everything possible to stop the Serbian aggression against the town of Srebrenica. A Foreign Office spokesman today said that the government of Pakistan is gravely concerned about the plight of the besieged population of Srebrenica and particularly of the innocent women and children. He said we have instructed our permanent representative at the United Nations to urgently raise the issue of the renewed Serbian aggression in the Security Council and seek immediate measures to halt this aggression.

Accord Signed for IDB Loan

BK0604143893 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 6 Apr 93

[Text] The Islamic Development Bank [IDB] will provide to Pakistan about $65 million in loans for various development projects. Agreements to this effect were signed in Islamabad today by the president of the Islamic Development Bank, Dr. Ahmad Muhammad 'Ali, and [Pakistan's] secretary [of the] Economic Affairs Division.

Later, addressing a news conference, the IDB president said the loans will be utilized for the import of crude oil from Saudi Arabia, establishment of a fertilizer plant in the private sector, and for the Mansehra village support project.

During its session in Islamabad, the bank's Board of Executive Directors considered a variety of important issues and subjects, including formulation of the bank's strategy for science and technology. The board also approved projects costing $130 million in Islamic countries and projects for Muslim minorities in non- member states.

Government Orders Security Crackdown on Arabs

BK0804062993 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 7 Apr 93 p 1

[By Ismail Khan]

[Text] Peshawar—Police on Tuesday launched a major operation against Arabs residing in the city and made a number of arrests, creating panic in the community.

A high police official said the action had been taken on the directives of the federal government.

According to government statistics, about 2,800 out of the more than 6,170 Arabs who came to Pakistan between 1987 and 1993 to take part in the Afgan jehad have not returned to their countries. They mostly belong to various Middle East and African countries.

University town police raided the office of Makatabul Khidmaat, and Arab Ngo, at around 3:30 p.m. and arrested its director, Abul Qasim.

The 51 years old Palestinian had taken over the charge of Maktab, following the death of Dr Azzam, a known Arab guerrilla leader. Dr Azzam was killed along with some of his associates in a bomb explosion in front of his office in university town on October 24, 1989.

The university town police when contacted confirmed the arrests of some Arabs but refused to disclose their number or identities.

The crackdown came hours before the minister of state for economic affairs, Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali who in a dramatic move announced his resignation from the office, accused the government of trying to protect 'terrorists'.

Egyptian President Husni Mubarak in an interview with the NY [NEW YORK] TIMES the other day had also blamed the Arab fighters of Afghan jehad for the violence in his country.

"Hayatyabad Police is reported to have arrested six Arabs who are said to be the Egyptians and Palestinians. Arab sources said the police arrested six Arabs from a vehicle near the Zaid Bin Haris Mosque in Hayatabad for illegally staying in Pakistan.

One of the arrested has been identified as Abul Manzir. But the Hayatabad police denied having made any arrests, saying that the two arabs arrested by them were later released, when their documents were found to be in order.

A top police officer confirmed that the police had launched a campaign against the Arab nationals living in the city. He said the police had made a number of arrests but was unable to say how many had been arrested.

The operation, he said, was confined to only those localities where Arabs were living mostly. A large number of Arabs are living in the posh Hayatabad and university town area. He disclosed the operation would continue to check their documents. Those whose documents were found to be invalid, he said, would be formally charged under the foreigners registration act.

He, however, did not know whether those found guilty would be deported. He said the action was being taken on the directive of the federal ministry of interior.

The crackdown, sent a wave of panic amongst the Arab community. an Arab national who did not want to be identified said the arrests had created great resentment amongst the community.

He claimed that the Arabs had valid passports, visas and residential permits. He said the arrests and police action was meant to harass the Arab families living in Peshawar."

Economic Minister Explains Resignation

BK0704131393 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 7 Apr 93 p 1

[By Mariana Baabar]

[Text] Islamabad—Minister of State for Economic Affairs Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali on Tuesday became the fifth minister to resign from the Cabinet.

Announcing his resignation, Asif Ali accused the government of failure in cracking down on "terrorists" who, as he put it, were roaming about freely in Pakistan, and said the government did nothing to stop them despite written advice from him.

Giving reasons for quitting the Cabinet he said there was gross economic mismanagement, the country was being run by Prime Minister's [PM] special assistant, Chaudhry Nisar Ali, and IB [Intelligence Bureau] chief Brig (Retd) Imtiaz, instructions were given to the Cabinet members not to meet President Ghuham Ishaq Khan, and that a mockery was made of sensitive issues of our foreign policy which put the security of the country at stake.

The press conference where Asif announced his resignation was organised by Anwar Saifullah, Ishaq's son-in-law, which negated all arguments that there had been a truce between the President and the PM.

Sardar Asif warned the Prime Minister that his policy of allowing "terrorists" to roam about freely in Pakistan was isolating the country not so much from the West but from the Muslim countries in the Arab League and GCC [Gulf Cooperation Council]. He said: "The Tunisian prime minister told me that a Tunisian 'terrorist' was living in Pakistan." The prime minister completely ignored this when told about it. Last week President Husni Mubarak in a meeting with him in London also talked about "terrorists" in Pakistan. "After a meeting with [U.S] Senator Larry Pressler on the subject of terrorism, I told the Prime Minister and the Foreign Office about security threats to Pakistan." How could the government allow the movement of these people in and out of Pakistan who are accused of terrorism? he asked.

Asif complained that on April 4 in a Cabinet meeting, and even before this, ministers were asked by Chaudhry Nisar that they should refrain from meeting the President.

Painting a grim picture of the colossal economic mismanagement, Sardar Asif said that probably the biggest ever deficit would be in the coming financial year when it will go up to 7 percent of the GDP. "Probably this would be even 8 percent, which will in the next two to three years result in the national debt surpassing the national returns. The creditors will take their money back which will mean an end to Pakistan's economy."

He condemned Nawaz Sharif's handling of the Afghan crisis in which both the Peshawar and Islamabad accords resulted in bloodshed. "The only solution is a broad-based government in which all parties are included. I sent several notes of advice which were ignored." Asif said when the Russian vice president visited Islamabad, there had been an understanding that if Russian POWs were handed over to him then Russia would declare full support for Kashmir and sign a 20-year treaty of peace and cooperation.

To a query that the government position has always been that these POWs are not on Pakistan's soil, Asif replied "when Mojahedin leaders are here, their ammunition dumps are here, how can we accept this argument?"

He said he had brought back an important message from the Central Asian republics concerning the security of the region, especially Afghanistan. "But the prime minister refused to see me, I could not bring it on the agenda of the Cabinet."

Recalling his visit to the Central Asian Republics, Asif said that he brought back 35 agreements and memorandums of understanding after getting the green signal from the government. "But the commitment was not fulfilled. Sartaj Aziz could not spare time to be briefed about the situation and on Tajikistan, even though I warned them, they went ahead with a billion dollar deal. Soon civil war started there."

The former minister said that the Cabinet was being misinformed on every issue. He said: "C. Nisar and IB chief are running the country while neither the cabinet or parliament, nor the PM is in charge. The prime minister cannot prevent Nisar from insulting Cabinet colleagues. Nisar had called ministers thieves, dacoits [robbers], incompetent people, cowards and disloyal. The PM cannot stop these two people who are responsible of causing great harm to Pakistan. It appears as if Scotland Yard has walked into 10 Downing Street or as if FBI has walked into the White House."

Recalling the last meeting of the League elders, Asif said that Nawaz Sharif allowed the MNAs [Members of the National Assembly] to insult the President, criticise the COAS, [chief of Army Staff], talked of getting a trade-off with GIK [Ghulam Ishaq Khan] while nominating him as presidential candidate in return for amending the Eighth Amendment.

At the meeting of PML [Pakistan Muslim League] elders, he claimed, Shahhaz Sharif and Nisar warned all ministers that no one was to call on the President and that they should pledge loyalty to the PM.

Some other reasons that Asif gave for his resignation included his differences with the PM on the question of "Riba" and women's rights and representation in the National Assembly. He also complained that the government refused to give him an additional secretary for helping out on over a billion dollars which had come in as aid.

When asked what Nawaz Sharif could do in such a situation, he replied, "It's for him to consider various optious. The choice is obvious—he should quit."

Khan-Sharif 'Differences' Discussed

BK0704161393 Rawalpindi JANG in Urdu 6 Apr 93 p 10

[Editorial: "Prime Minister's Announcement—Good News"]

[Text] The meeting between the president and the prime minister on Sunday and the prime minister's subsequent announcement—following his Cabinet's advice and approval—that President Ghulam Ishaq Khan will be the candidate of the government and the Muslim League Parliamentary Party [MLPP] for the upcoming presidential election constitute a very positive development on the political front. At its 20 February meeting, the MLPP had authorized Prime Minister Mohammad Nawaz Sharif to make decisions on the issues of the Eighth Amendment to the Constitution and the presidential candidate at an appropriate time, keeping in view the best interest of the party and the country. The prime minister has now utilized that authority. Before making the above announcement, he held a detailed meeting with the president, expressed his full confidence in him, and informed him that the government wishes to seek further guidance from his experience and foresight, and, hence, he should express his willingness to be its candidate for the next presidential election. Later, in his brief address to an informal meeting of the Cabinet, the prime minister said that the aforementioned decision will be in the best interest of the country and the nation and will guarantee a bright future for all of us. He said the attempts made by certain shortsighted and indiscreet persons to fulfill their political designs by creating misunderstandings have utterly failed and their hopes have been badly shattered. They have failed once more, he added.

The president's response to the prime minister's offer has not yet been made public. But, the president is said to have stated in the presence of two ministers, Elahi Bux Sumroo and General Abdul Majid Malik, who accompanied the prime minister to the presidential palace, that in addition to Nawaz Sharif's offer, certain other friends had also requested that he be the presidential candidate and that he will make his final decision keeping these requests in mind, and that "he has still not made any final decision in this regard." On that occasion, the president also said that he never created any differences; it was the other side that showed all the differences, and that he will adopt any final mode of action only after reviewing the latest situation.

While noting the significance and advantages of the positive development as a result of the meeting of the president and prime minister, it would not be out of place to mention here that the above development is merely a first step toward correcting the prevailing situation, and much remains to be done to finally settle the issues and to normalize the situation. It is now quite clear that "the prime minister's camp has abandoned its intention to bring about a change in the Eighth Amendment for the time being. [no end quote marks as received]. The press note issued after the meeting between the president and the prime minister does not mention anything about the Eighth Amendment, but all indications lead to the conclusion that the issue has been shelved for the present and this will ultimately result in ending the differences and estrangement between the president and prime minister's camps.

But, along with the above news about an understanding between the president and the prime minister, reports about the resignation of three parliamentary secretaries and members of some committees have also come in. In the meantime, Hamid Nasir Chatha has stated that his struggle has nothing to do with the differences between the president and the prime minister and that "he will continue to strive to foil the attempts to capture the Muslim League." He has also stated that "22 April is not

far off, when everything will become crystal clear." Chatha's statement that he will introduce a no-confidence motion against the prime minister in the 22 April session of the National Assembly is indicative of the fact that "all is not well" on the political front yet and that all issues are still not resolved.

Meanwhile, Abdul Ghafoor Hoti, the contender for the senior vice presidentship of the Muslim League, has expressed surprise saying "what kind of compromise? The situation is moving in a different direction, but these people are talking about a compromise." There are reports that the National Democratic Alliance [NDA] leadership, especially Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi, Maulana Kausar Niazi, Ghulam Mustafa Khar, and "dissident" Muslim League leader Mian Zahid Sarfaraz, have become extraordinarily active and have intensified the process of mutual consultations. They have also hinted at the possibility of their meeting with the president in the near future. NDA chief and veteran politician Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan is travelling to Islamabad and is expected to meet the president. The viewpoints and preferences of these leaders are not a hidden secret. Everybody knows what they want. It is totally correct that the president is neither responsible for nor bound by what these leaders do or desire, but reactions of Chatha, Hoti, and the NDA leaders to the latest development highlight the need on the part of the prime minister's camp to be still more cautious. Nasir Chatha and Hoti hold themselves fully responsible for their steps and mode of action.

All those who have reacted negatively to the meeting between the president and prime minister, and the prime minister's subsequent announcement should welcome the prospects and signs of an end to the state of uncertainty that was created due to the differences between the president and the prime minister and must not take any step that may impair the process of understanding. The president's decisions are not subservient to those of anyone else and he will do only that which is in the interests of the country. But, these people should also play their role in attenuating the political heat and cooperate in carrying forward the process that has been started with the meeting between the president and the prime minister, or at least desist from obstructing it.

The prime minister has seriously realized the need for flexibility in his attitude to remove the differences that had cropped up between him and the president. By showing that flexibility, he not only saved the situation from getting worse but also tried to dispel all suspicions and misgivings about himself, and the prime minister's efforts in this regard have been appreciated by the majority of the political quarters of the country. In fact, distrust seems to be the root cause of the current problems and a sense of trust must therefore be displayed for the smooth settlement of the issues between the president and the prime minister. Unless and until the atmosphere of doubt, suspicions, and distrust is fully dispersed, nothing positive can be achieved. We understand that the spirit of accommodation and understanding and sagacity shown by the two sides to protect the political system should be further strengthened through mutual trust. It remains to be seen as to who is going to reap what benefit in the future from the encouraging situation and the partial removal of doubts and suspicions as a result of the flexible attitude adopted by the prime minister. Only time will tell what results these efforts will ultimately bring.

Through this process of understanding, the prime minister's camp has given the impression that the situation arising out of the presidential election issue and the Eighth Amendment was not caused by the prime minister but by others. This has prompted the presidential camp to claim that from now on there will be no differences between the president and the prime minister on the question of the Eighth Amendment, but the president's complaints about the government's functioning will continue to exist.

In the interest of national (?politics) and the country, we would like to convey to the prime minister that he has a notable number of reliable colleagues in the form of ministers, advisers, and a kitchen cabinet. Several agencies are also working to keep him posted on the situation. But why was the gravity of the situation not fathomed in time in spite of all these resources and facilities? Now, certain political circles are holding some of the prime minister's colleagues responsible for the developments. They need to ponder why it happened, who was behind it, and how such situations can be avoided in the future. This is necessary because the nature of our society is such that on one occasion the influential people gather around any person in power to consolidate their position and to prove themselves indispensable, but on other occasions, to serve their own selfish interests, they play both sides and do not want to see that personality become fully powerful. This group of people include ministers, advisers, and bureaucrats.

We also consider it our duty at this juncture to remind Nawaz Sharif that we were the first to advise him to seek the cooperation of notable political forces and other forces in doing what he intends to accomplish, because collective wisdom is always better than the thinking of one single person and in major political affairs, cooperation of all qualified political forces and other forces is considered to be the guarantee of success. This cooperation is all the more imperative because of the presence of influential and powerful political circles in the country who think that it is necessary to maintain the Eighth Amendment. In conclusion, we would again like to tell the prime minister that he should spare no effort in making the atmosphere pleasant and in removing doubts and suspicions by adopting the same attitude he had before, which has helped in partially removing suspicions and in ending the atmosphere of tension. We pray to God that the political tension that has had an unpleasant impact on the economic life of the country will be eliminated through the positive attitude recently adopted by the president and the prime minister, and that it will not affect the ongoing struggle for national reconstruction and development.

Gas Field To Meet Ten Percent of Needs

BK0604104893 Hong Kong AFP in English 1142 GMT 5 Apr 93

[Text] Karachi, April 5 (AFP)—Pakistan's newest gas field, with proven reserves of 700 billion cubic feet in the north of the southern province of Sindh, will start operating in 1995, corporate sources said here Monday.

The field at Kandanwarin in the Tajjal concession area, discovered in 1989 by the UK-registered company LASMO Oil, is eventually expected to meet ten percent of the country's total gas needs, they said.

Initial plans envisage an output of 152 million cubic feet daily from six wells.

LASMO has so far spent 70 million dollars on exploration and appraisal and over the next two years 130 million dollars more will be spent on a gas processing plant and additional wells to bring the field on stream.

The government-controlled Oil and Gas Development Corporation (OGDC) holds a 50 percent working interest in the project, LASMO, the operator 18.42 percent, and Kufpec Pakistan Limited and Idemitsu Pakistan Oil Exploration each hold 15.79 percent.

LASMO recently signed an agreement with the Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGC) which is constructing 408 kilometer (253 mile) long pipeline from the gas field to this port city to be completed in three years and four months, a company spokesman said.

The project would cost 4,905 million rupees (188.6 million dollars), including 82.56 million dollars in foreign exchange, he said.

Sri Lanka

Security Forces Impose Curfew in North

BK0804002093 Hong Kong AFP in English 0708 GMT 7 Apr 93

[Text] Colombo, April 7 (AFP)—Sri Lankan security forces have imposed an indefinite curfew in large parts of the north controlled by Tamil separarist guerrillas, a military spokesman said Wednesday.

No reason was given for the curfew which the spokesman said was clamped Tuesday in areas held by Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) guerrillas in the sprawling Mannar District.

The military has frequently imposed curfews in northern areas to assist fresh offensives by security forces in the region. The spokesman said that the curfew would not be enforced in government- controlled villages in Mannar.

Curfews in the north could be monitored only by air since ground troops have no access to large parts of the region that is controlled by LTTE guerrillas. Government helicopters strafe violators.

The LTTE is fighting to carve an independent state in the northeast for Sri Lanka's minority Tamil community. Thousands have been killed in the LTTE-led separatist campaign.

SAARC Achievements Under Premadasa Noted

BK0804094493 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 0805 GMT 8 Apr 93

["OANA/pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, Apr 8 (LANKAPUVATH)—The tenure year office of Sri Lankan President Ranasinghe Premadasa as chairman of SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation] was, according to foreign observers, a period of dynamic action where core areas such as poverty alleviation, the South Asian Development Fund, South Asian trading agreement, liberalization of trade in the region, South Asia region development fund, the independent poverty alleviation commission and the conference of children in Colombo September last year were landmarks. This was stated by Presidential Advisor on International Relations Bradman Weerakoon in response to a question as to whether it was not correct that the most significant progress in the history of SAARC had been made during the year of office of Sri Lanka as chairman of SAARC and that during this one year period there was great movement while, earlier, SAARC was considered just a talking shop. Mr. Weerakoon also said that closer cooperation had been forged during the chairmanship of Sri Lanka within the South Asian region.

The presidential advisor said that President Premadasa will be leaving Colombo Thursday afternoon for the 7th SAARC summit to be held in Dhaka April 10 and 11. He will participate in bilateral discussions on Friday with the SAARC leaders. The retreat will be held in the afternoon on board a ship on the River Megna after the opening session of the summit from 10.00 AM to 12.30 PM on April 10th. On Sunday April 11th, the leaders will hold bilateral meetings followed by the closing ceremony.

In response to another question Mr. Weerakoon said Sri Lanka will probably propose the holding of informal meetings of SAARC leaders so that the association would have greater flexibility.

Cabinet spokesman Ranil Wickremasinghe said the leaders could meet informally to discuss a common strategy for areas affecting the region, for instance, if the trade war keeps hotting up in the Pacific and (the rest) of Asia, South Asia was being left out.

After the summit President Premadasa will visit Varanasi, Saranath [in India] where he will attend the unveiling of a statue of Dr. Ambedkar, Kusinagar and Buddhagaya where the president will hand over 100 houses to the villagers as a gift from the people of Sri Lanka. Mr. Weerakoon said that construction of the 100 houses was financed by private funds. President Premadasa will also visit Shravasthi on 15th April before returning to the country.